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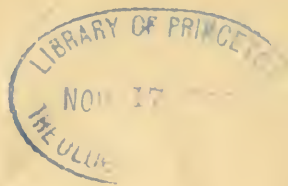








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LECTURES



ON THE

# AUGSBURG CONFESSION,

ON THE

HOLMAN FOUNDATION.

DELIVERED IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF  
THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH, GETTYSBURG, PA.

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## PREFACE

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THE following Lectures appear in book form, through a request of the Lutheran Publication Society, made at its meeting in Omaha, Neb., June, 1887.

A sufficient number of subscriptions having been received in advance to justify the expense of publication, a limited edition of the work is published.

The Lectures are printed in their full and complete form as originally delivered, except that in several of the Lectures there is an omission of a few brief statements which do not affect the discussion.

An extended specific index to the entire work may be found at the end of the volume.

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# ARTICLE I.

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## THE TRINITY.

BY J. A. BROWN, D. D., LL.D.

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### INTRODUCTION.\*

BY the terms of this foundation "the lecturer may select one, and but one, of the twenty-one Doctrinal Articles of the Augsburg Confession: but no one Article shall be chosen twice, until all shall have been lectured upon." The design is that this Confession may be thus more thoroughly examined, its doctrines better understood, and thus both ministers and people become more familiar with the faith so nobly confessed by the heroes of the great Reformation. To that Confession, and to it alone, so far as human creeds or confessions are concerned, the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in her Constitution, acknowledges allegiance. Standing on the broad basis of Lutheran catholicity, she receives it as "a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Divine Word, and of the faith of our Church founded upon that Word," but clings

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\* To the REV. SAMUEL A. HOLMAN belongs the distinguished honor of having originated and founded a Lectureship on the Augsburg Confession, in connection with the Theological Seminary of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. So far as we know, this is the first foundation of the kind, not only in the Church in these United States, but in the world: and whilst the benevolent founder has thus shown a commendable zeal for this venerable Symbol of our Church—the mother Symbol of Protestantism, and only universal Symbol of Lutheranism—he will rear for himself a monument the most noble and imperishable. What his modest nature never once thought of, will be all the more certainly secured, and the name of SAMUEL A. HOLMAN will henceforth, and through all time, be identified with the Augsburg Confession and the Theological Seminary of the General Synod.

to the "Word of God as the only infallible rule of faith and practice."

Feeling myself highly honored by being selected to deliver the first lecture under this provision, and left thus free to select any one of the Doctrinal Articles as the subject of discussion, I have concluded that, waiving all personal predilections, and all considerations growing out of the special interest felt, at this time, by the Church in certain Articles, the least objectionable, and upon the whole the best course, is to begin at the beginning. This will leave no room for any suspicion of sinister design, or of taking advantage of the opportunity to thrust upon the Church an unwelcome discussion. To others will be left the task of discussing the topics around which the conflict has raged in the Church for centuries. It will be ours to examine and defend one of the great doctrines of the "common faith." The first Article of the Confession will accordingly be the subject of the present lecture.

## I.

### AUGSBURG CONFESSION. ARTICLE I.

Any account of the origin of this Confession, as well as any attempt at eulogy upon it, would be here as much out of place as it would be unnecessary. We must, therefore, omit all notice of the stirring times, and the illustrious men, that gave to the Church and the world this most important and most celebrated Confession of our Protestant Christianity. The Reformers justly and truly maintained that they were not founding a new Church, nor introducing a new and strange faith, but were aiming to purify the Church from corrupt doctrines and abuses, which had crept in, and to lead her back to the pure faith of the Sacred Scriptures, and of the Church universal in the early centuries. Hence the very first sentence of the first Article makes mention of the Nicene Creed, and confesses the faith as settled in the Church twelve centuries before, and since that time, among orthodox believers, universally received. The divine existence, and constitution of the Godhead—the trinity of persons in unity of essence, as "Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible," accompanied by a notice of the leading errors opposed to it, which are condemned and rejected, the authors of the Confession placed first, as the great fundamental truth, underlying



all other divine truth, and all true religion. This Article, so appropriately placed first, reads as follows: \*

"Our Churches unanimously hold and teach, agreeably to the Decree of the Council of Nice, that there is only one Divine Essence, which is called, and truly is, God; but that there are three persons in this one Divine Essence, equally powerful, equally eternal,—God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost,—who are one Divine Essence, eternal, incorporeal, indivisible, infinite in power, wisdom and goodness, the Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. And the word *person* is not intended to express a part or quality of another, but that which subsists of itself, precisely as the Fathers have employed this term on this subject.

"Every heresy opposed to this Article is, therefore, condemned: as that of the Manichæans, who assume two principles, the one good, the other evil. Likewise the heresies of the Valentinians, Arians, Eunomians, Mahometans, and the like; also that of the ancient and modern Samosatensians, who admit but one person, and sophistically explain away these two,—the Word and the Holy Spirit,—asserting that they must not be viewed as distinct persons, but that the Word

\* The basis of this first Article of the Confession is as follows:

1. The first of the Marburg Articles as agreed upon by the Lutherans and Reformed, October 3d, 1529: "We believe and hold that there is one true, living God, Creator of heaven and earth, and all creatures, and that this same God, one in essence and nature, is threefold in person, that is to say, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as was declared in the Council of Nice, and is still taught by the universal Christian Church."

2. The first of the Swabach Articles, as altered and enlarged from the Marburg Article, October 16th, 1529: "We confess that constantly and with great accord it is taught among us, that there is one only true God, Creator of heaven and earth; yet so, that in this only true Divine Essence, there are three distinct persons, to wit: GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT; and that the Son, begotten of the Father from eternity, is truly and by nature God with the Father: and that the Holy Spirit, proceeding from eternity from the Father and the Son, is truly and by nature God with the Father and the Son: as all these things can be most clearly and firmly demonstrated by Scripture, John i: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him.' Matthew xxviii.: 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:' and many other like passages, especially in the Gospel of John."

We have availed ourselves of the English translation of these Articles in the Ev. Review, Vol. X, 474; II, 78.

signifies the oral word or voice, and that the Holy Ghost is the principle of motion in things.”\*

In this Article the Church of the Reformation is placed fully and distinctly on the faith of the old ecumenical creed of the Council of Nice; or, more strictly the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Symbol.

\* The translation of the Article given above is that of the Newmarket English copy, Second Edition, revised by C. P. Krauth, Sen., D. D. It differs somewhat in form, but not in meaning, from the Original—a copy of which is subjoined in German and Latin, from Müller's Edition, 1848.

*Der I. Artikel. Von Gott.*

“Erstlich wird einträchtiglich gelehret und gehalten, laut des Beschluss Concilii Nicaeni, dass ein einig göttlich Wesen sei, welches genannt wird und wahrhaftig ist Gott, und sind doch drei Personen in demselben einigen göttlichen Wesen, gleich gewaltig, gleich ewig, Gott Vater, Gott Sohn, Gott heiliger Geist, alle drei ein göttlich Wesen, ewig, ohne Stück, ohne End, unermesslicher Macht, Weisheit und Güte, ein Schöpfer und Erhalter aller sichtbaren und unsichtbaren Ding. Und wird durch das Wort *Persona* verstanden nicht ein Stück, nicht ein Eigenschaft in einen andern, sondern das selbst besteht, wie denn die Väter in dieser Sachen dies Wort gebraucht haben.

“Derhalben\*werden verworfen alle Ketzerien so diesem Artikel zuwider sind, also Manichäi, die zween Götter gesetzt haben, ein bösen und ein guten. Item Valentiniani, Ariani, Eunomiani, Mahometisten und alle dergleichen, auch Samosatani, alt und neu, so nur eine Person setzen und von diesen zweien, Wort und heiligem Geist, Sophisterei machen und sagen, dass es nicht müssen unterschiedene Personen sein, sondern Wort bedeute leiblich Wort oder Stimme, und der heilige Geist sei erschaffene Regung in Kreaturen.”

For the variæ lectiones see Müller's Edition, S. B. 866–907.

*Art. I. De Deo.*

“*Ecclesiæ magno consensu apud nos docent, decretum Nicaenae synodi de unitate essentiae divinae et de tribus personis verum et sine ulla dubitatione credendum esse. Videlicet, quod sit una essentia divina, quae et appellatur et est Deus, aeternus, incorporeus, impartibilis, immensa potentia, sapientia, bonitate creator et conservator omnium rerum visibilium et invisibilium; et tamen tres sint personae ejusdem essentiae et potentiae, et coaeternae, Pater, Filius et Spiritus Sanctus. Et nomine personarum utuntur ea significatione, qua usi sunt in hac causa scriptores ecclesiastici, ut significet non partem aut qualitatem in alio, sed quod proprie subsistit.*

“*Damnant omnes haereses, contra hunc articulum exortas, ut Manichaeos, qui duo principia ponebant, bonum et malum, item Valentinianos, Arianos, Eunomianos, Mahometistas et omnes horum similes. Damnant et Samosatenos veteres et neotericos, qui quum tantum unam personam esse contendunt, de Verbo et de Spiritu Sancto astute et impie rhetoricantur, quod non sint personae distinctae, sed quod Verbum significet verbum vocale et Spiritus motum in rebus creatum.*”

The Creed of the Nicene Council was somewhat enlarged and improved at the first Council of Constantinople, A. D., 381, and as such was commonly spoken of as the Nicene Creed. It is in this amended form that it has been introduced into the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church, and it is to this Creed that reference is had in this first Article of the Augsburg Confession.\*

#### NICENE CREED.

As the doctrine of the Godhead—"One Divine Essence" and "three persons," trinity in unity, and unity in trinity—received its creed form in this Symbol, and has received no additions or alterations since, and is not likely to, it must be deeply interesting and instructive to examine what was settled so firmly in that Confession. A doctrinal statement that has stood for more than fifteen centuries, unchallenged by the orthodox churches, and as an impregnable bulwark against all heresies and heretics, on this point, must command our admiring attention. "It implies," says Stanley, "an immense vitality, inherent in the orthodox doctrine established at Nicæa, that it should have won its way against such formidable antagonists, and should have securely seated itself in the heart of the Church for so many subsequent centuries."

The doctrines of our holy religion are not delivered in the Bible in systematic order, nor in dogmatic form. We are left to construct a system from the ample materials provided, and to give to each doctrine its proper form and place. Our present systems of faith have been wrought out, amid many struggles, in the life and consciousness of the Church, and must be tested by the sure Word of God. It is not at all strange, therefore, that in the early Church there soon appeared some difference in the manner of stating certain doctrines, and especially in regard to the Trinity. At the first, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were worshipped as divine; but when men began to speculate and define they soon found difficulties, and these difficulties leading to differences. The doctrine of the Trinity, underlying and moulding as it must all the other great doctrines of Christianity, was the first to receive the earnest attention of the Church.

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\* On the relation between the Nicene and Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creeds, see Walch's *Introductio in Lib. Sym.* 121-159. Müller's *S. B. Intro.* XLVI-L. Stanley's *History of the Eastern Church*, 242, with the Church Histories of that period generally.

Not now to speak of minor differences and diversities, the period of the Nicene Council exhibits two prominent conflicting tendencies, the one to hold to the unity of the divine essence at the expense of the personality of the Son and the Holy Ghost; the other to hold to a trinity of persons, so distinct and unlike, differing in kind as well as degree, as to utterly deny the unity of the divine essence. By the former, the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost was not denied; but all three were regarded as one, not only in essence, but without any proper distinction of persons. The Son was God, but not a distinct personality, or different from the Father. The Holy Ghost was God, but also without any distinction in personality from the Father or the Son. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were only different manifestations of the one same essence and person; or one God acting in different modes, and under different relations. According to this view there is no real distinction between the essence and the personality of the Godhead. There is one essence, and but one person, though this one person may reveal himself to us under different relations, and as performing different offices, corresponding with the terms Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The opposite tendency was to hold to a trinity of persons, yet so distinct as to deny the unity of essence. The Son was not only a different person, but also differing in essence from the Father. He might be allowed to possess a nature or essence similar to that of God, *ὁμοούσιον*, but not identical with it, *ὁμοουσίον*. The Father alone is true and absolute God, the Son is of a different essence and order. Their natures are essentially distinct. The Son was created or produced by the Father, and must differ from him. There was less attention to the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, but if allowed to be a person, it was as a creature, made by the Father, through the Son. Neither Son nor Holy Ghost was identical in essence with the Father, but belongs to the order of beings created or produced, and is not one with God.\*

These two tendencies witnessed many diversities on either side, but the result was to deny the unity of the essence or the trinity of

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\* For a fuller and more satisfactory account of what can only be touched upon in this Lecture, the reader is referred to the histories of that period, and to Hagenbach's Hist. of Doct., Vol. I; also Shedd's Hist. of Doct., Vol. I, 246-375; Cudworth's Int. Sys., and Dorner's great work.



persons. To correct both of these, and present in true form the doctrine of the Trinity, was the work of the Nicene Council.\*

The immediate occasion of that famous Council was the teaching of Arius, a presbyter in the Church at Alexandria. Carrying out more fully and logically Origen's doctrine of generation and subordination, with the distinction of essence between the Father and the Son, he was led to deny the true divinity of the latter. He could not recognize a third essence between that of divinity and the creature, and so boldly maintained that the Son was only a created being—the first and most exalted of all creatures, but still a created being. "We must," says Arius, "either suppose two divine original essences without beginning, and independent of each other; we must substitute a Dyarchy in place of the Monarchy; or we must not shrink from asserting that the Logos had a beginning of his existence, that there was a moment when he did not as yet exist." The doctrine of Arius was condemned by his own bishop, Alexander, and also by a Council of Alexandria, A. D. 321. But this did not silence the heretic, or stop the spread of his doctrine. Like poison it infused itself into the Church, and the baneful effects were soon manifest. Division and strife, the natural result of false teaching, followed, and the Church was greatly convulsed. To produce harmony, and settle the true faith, Constantine was moved to call a general Council at Nice in Bithynia, A. D. 325.

Every thing conspired to give importance and eclat to this Council. The place of meeting—"the second Capital of Bithynia," and so accessible by land and water—the presence and interest of the Emperor Constantine, the number of bishops and other clergy, its being the first of the so-called General Councils, the important doctrine to be settled, all these combined to render it an occasion of no ordinary interest. The attendance of three hundred and eighteen

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\* "The homoousian Trinity of the orthodox went exactly in the middle, betwixt that monoousian Trinity of Sabellius, which was a Trinity of different notions or conceptions only of one and the selfsame thing, and that other heteroousian Trinity of Arius, which was a Trinity of separate and heterogeneous substances (one of which only was God, and the other creatures), this being a Trinity of hypostases or persons numerically differing from one another, but all of them agreeing in one common or general essence of the God-head or the uncreated nature, which is eternal and infinite." Cudworth's *Int. Sys.*, Vol. I, 803. (Andover.)



bishops, besides a vast number of other clergy and visitors, together with the presence of the Emperor, made it one of the most august bodies that ever assembled.\* The result of their deliberations, discussions and decisions, is what we now have to do with.

The main point to be determined was the nature of the Son, and His relation to the Father. The Arians and Semi-Arians were willing to admit that Christ was God, but explained it in their own way. The usual forms of expression they could subscribe, and still maintain their own opinions. The trouble was to detect and make bare the subtle error that was corrupting the faith and endangering the very life of the Church. One magical word solved the difficulty, and, like Ithuriel's spear, pierced the delusive veil by which this heresy thought to cover itself. The word *ὁμοούσιον* had been rejected and condemned by the Council at Antioch, as favoring Sabellianism, and when introduced at the Council of Nice produced very great excitement. It was denounced by the heretics as absurd. But this only led the orthodox party to look upon it with more favor, and then to seize upon it as the very word needed. It served the very purpose, and was about the only word that Arius and his friends could not subscribe. They could say the Son was divine, of like nature or essence, *ὁμοιούσιον*, with the Father. But other beings might be of like nature with God, and yet not be very God. There was room for equivocation and concealment here. The Council declared the Son to be *ὁμοούσιον*, "consubstantial," of the same essence with the Father. This word admitted of no equivocation. It declared the Father and the Son to be of one essence, and hence removed the Son to an infinite distance from all created beings. The Council further declared him to be "begotten, not made," and condemned those who say "there was when he was not," and "before he was begotten he was not," and "that he came into existence from what was not."

The Creed adopted at this Council, like all the ancient Creeds, was very brief, but it formed a most important era in the history of the Church, and of Christian doctrine. No form of doctrine has been more widely received, or cherished with a more profound regard. "Throughout the Eastern Church," says Stanley, "the Ni-

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\* For a very interesting and instructive account of the Council of Nice, with authorities, see Stanley's *History of the Eastern Church*, 114-280. Also Neander, Vol. II, 372-386.

cene Creed is still the one bond of faith. It is still recited in its original tongue by the peasants of Greece. Its recitation is still the culminating point of the service in the Church of Russia. The great bell of the Kremlin tower sounds during the whole time that its words are chanted. It is repeated aloud in the presence of the assembled people by the Czar at his coronation. It is worked in pearls on the robes of the highest dignitaries of Moscow. One of the main grounds of schism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from the established Church of Russia, was that the old dissenters were seized with the belief that the patriarch Nikon had altered one of the sacred words of the original text of the Creed."\*

This Creed was afterwards altered and amended so as to include a more distinct acknowledgment of the divinity of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of the Holy Ghost did not receive special attention at

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\* The history of this Nicene Creed furnishes, however, a very interesting and instructive lesson on unaltered and unalterable Confessions. It "was meant to be," says Stanley, "an end of theological controversy." The "Word of the Lord which was given in the Œcumenical Council of Nicæa," says Athanasius, "remaineth forever." To it was applied the text, "Remove not the ancient landmarks which the fathers have set." No addition was contemplated: it was of itself sufficient to refute every heresy. \* \* \* The Council of Sardica declared that it was amply sufficient, and that no second Creed should ever appear. When the next General Council met in 381, at Constantinople, although it had to confront two new heresies—those of Appollonius and Macedonius—it did not venture to do more than recite the original Creed of Nicæa. The additions which now appear in that Creed, and which are commonly ascribed to the Fathers of Constantinople, did, probably, then make their appearance. But they were not drawn up by that Council. \* \* The divines of Ephesus showed their sense of the finality of the Nicene Creed still more strongly. After reciting it aloud, in its original form, they decreed \* \* that henceforward no one should "propose, or write, or compose any other Creed than that defined by the Fathers in the city of Nicæa," under pain of deposition from clerical office if they were clergy, and of excommunication if they were laymen. After mentioning "the changes of the most unchangeable of all Creeds," the historian adds: "Every time that the Creed is recited with its additions and omissions, it conveys to us the wholesome warning, that our faith is not of necessity bound up with the literal text of Creeds, or with the formal decrees of Councils. It existed before the Creed was drawn up; it is larger than the letter of any Creed could circumscribe. The fact that the whole Christian world has altered the Creed of Nicæa, and broken the decree of Ephesus, without ceasing to be catholic or Christian, is a decisive proof that common sense, after all, is the supreme arbiter, and corrective even of Œcumenical Councils." Stanley, 242-246.

the Council of Nice. No question having at that time arisen, on this point, it was deemed sufficient to confess their faith in the words—after belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, etc.—“*And in the Holy Ghost.*” But when afterwards false and dangerous doctrines concerning the Holy Ghost were introduced and advocated by Macedonius, at the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost was more fully set forth, as follows: “And (we believe) in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is to be worshipped and glorified, and who spake through the prophets. Other alterations were made, especially the addition of the famous “filioque” by the Western Church, but of which we have not time to speak here. Thus completed, the Creed is known in our Church as the Nicene, but more strictly should be called the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed.\*

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\* The original of these Creeds may be readily seen in a number of works accessible to most readers of the *Review*, as Pearson on the Creed, Appendix, 593, 597; Müller's S. B. Intro. xlvii, xlviii; Gieseler's Church History, Vol. I, 297, 312, etc. A translation of both is subjoined, that the reader may be able to compare.

NICENE.—“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible:

“And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is, of the substance of the Father; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; of the same substance with the Father; by whom all things were made, that are in heaven and that are in earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down, and was made flesh, and became man, suffered, and rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead.

“And in the Holy Ghost.

“But those who say, there was when he was not, and that before He was begotten He was not, and that He came into existence from what was not; or profess that He is of a different substance or essence, or that the Son of God is created, mutable or changeable, the Catholic Church anathematizes.”

NICÆNO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN.—“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

“And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; of the same substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was made flesh of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and became man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into the heavens, and sits

Thus much has been said of the history of this Creed, because the Reformers made its doctrine that of their Confession, and it seemed the shortest and simplest way of advancing to the truth confessed. The decisions of the Councils as embraced in this Creed exhibit the following important points in the doctrine of the Trinity:

1. *The unity of the Divine Essence.* "*We believe in one God.*" This opposed everything like tri-theism, and was necessary to guard against any tendency to worship inferior deities. It is a sufficient answer to cavilling objectors, ancient and modern, of worshipping more than one God. Not even the monarchians were more decided in their opposition to any and every view that arrayed itself against this fundamental truth.

2. *The trinity of persons in the Godhead.* The terms *trinity* and *person* were not indeed introduced into the Creed, but the ideas corresponding with these terms are there. Belief is confessed in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; in each separately, as a distinct subsistence, and the triune God declared worthy to be "worshipped and glorified." The trinity in unity, and the unity in trinity, is clearly contained in the Symbol; and according to Athanasius, "the Catholic Church doth neither believe less than this homousian Trinity, lest it should comply with Judaism, or sink into Sabellianism: nor yet more than this, lest on the other hand, it should tumble down into Arianism, which is the same with Pagan Polytheism and idolatry.\*

3. *The identity in essence of the Son with the Father.* ὁμοούσιον, of the same essence or consubstantial with the Father—God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God. The Father and the Son, though differing in person, so that they are not the same in this respect, yet are of one and the same essence.

4. *The eternal generation of the Son.* This is not stated in this form and in so many words, yet clearly enough taught. The Son

at the right hand of the Father; and will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. Of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father (and the Son), who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

"And in one holy, catholic, Apostolic Church.

"We confess one baptism for the remission of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

\* Quoted in Cudworth.

is "*begotten, not made*"—"begotten before all worlds;" and in the old Nicene form, those are condemned, who say "there was, when he was not," or "before he was begotten he was not."

5. *The divinity and procession of the Holy Ghost.* He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and "with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified."

6. *The triune God, as "the Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible."* This truth is not so distinctly set forth here, as in the Augsburg Confession, yet understood to be taught. There was a progressive development in the form of this doctrine. The Apostles' Creed says: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," ascribing creation to him alone, though not designing to exclude from all participation the Son and the Spirit. The Nicene, in addition, has in reference to the Son, "by whom all things were made that are in heaven and in earth." The Constantinopolitan still adds, in regard to the Holy Spirit, "the Lord and Giver of life;" thus uniting the three persons in the work of creating and governing the world.

To this last point the Augsburg Confession has given a more complete and decisive expression. It presents, in the clearest manner possible, the triune God as Creator and Preserver, and thus stands in most direct opposition to Atheism, Pantheism, Deism, Naturalism, and every varying form of infidelity that would undermine and destroy faith in the Triune God as the Maker and Ruler of the universe. It is not merely a Supreme Being, a great First Cause, such as many semi-infidels are ready to acknowledge, and popular writers on physical science use to grace their pages: nor yet a personal God, existing along with the universe, yet indifferent to its affairs; but God, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is here confessed, who has made, and now preserves and governs all things. The entire universe of mind and matter, of beings of every order and rank, and of whatsoever nature, all come forth from His creative hand, and are all cared for and governed by the same august and gracious Being. Nature, and Providence, and grace, do not belong to entirely different administrations, but are parts of one grand system, extending through all time, and embracing creation, providence, and redemption, and all under the same Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, "the Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible."



## ANALYSIS OF ARTICLE I OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.

The first Article of the Augsburg Confession, avowedly based on the Nicene Creed, though not retaining the very words of that ancient Symbol, under a very general analysis exhibits the following results: 1. The unity of the divine essence; 2. The trinity of persons in the Godhead, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; 3. The divinity of each, co-equal and co-eternal; 4. The Triune God, the Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible; 5. The term *person* employed according to the usage of the Fathers; 6. Opposing heresies condemned.

## PERSON.

The term person is carefully guarded against misapprehension and abuse. It "is not intended to express a part or quality of another, but that which subsists of itself, precisely as the Fathers have employed this term on this subject."

This word the Fathers had made use of to express the different subsistences, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the one essence, a trinity of personæ in the Godhead; and the authors of the Confession, without attempting any precise definition, or extended explanation, appropriated the term. They had the less occasion to attempt any further elucidation of the term, since its use had been current in the Church for more than a thousand years, and in a sense which, if not perfectly comprehensible, was yet free from any serious liability to misapprehension, and served to guard the true faith from the insidious attempts of false teachers. We really know as little of the essence, as we do of the persons of the Godhead, and must satisfy ourselves with the use of such terms as will best express our imperfect knowledge and limited conceptions of this great mystery, and at the same time afford security against the encroachments of error.

Among the early Fathers, Greek and Latin, there was much difficulty in settling the precise meaning and use of terms in regard to the Trinity; and even to the present day the difficulty is felt and acknowledged. For a time the Greek Fathers used *ὑποστάσις* and *οὐσία* without any clear distinction, to denote substance or essence, and seem to have employed them in the Nicene Creed. Origen was the first to use *ὑποστάσις* to express the different subsistences in the Godhead, and to speak of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as three hypostases (*τρεῖς ὑποστασεις*), but his use was not at once accepted. As

the word was commonly used to signify substance, it was liable to serious misapprehension, and many would interpret the meaning to be three substances or essences in the Godhead, which was utterly contrary to the faith.

Tertullian was the first to use *persona* in the same sense, and to speak definitely of a trinity of *personæ* in the Godhead. He calls the *Logos* a person, and defends the use of the term, declaring him to be the second, and the Holy Spirit the third.\* But this use was liable to objection, since *persona* commonly signified the mask worn, or the character in which one appeared, and so might be understood as favoring a mere difference in character or appearance. As the Latin Fathers could only render ὑποστασις by *substantia*, which was the same as *essentia*, they objected to that term, and προσωπον was introduced in its stead.

Gradually, however, these two words, ὑποστασις and *persona*, the one Greek the other Latin, assumed among theological writers a more definite and technical meaning, and became the established words to express the faith of the Church in the distinctions existing in the Godhead. But it must not be supposed that these Fathers did not fully appreciate the difficulties in the use of such terms, and the weakness of the human mind to comprehend, or of human language to express, the mysterious truth. Augustin says: *In truth since the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, and the Holy Spirit, who is also called the gift of God, can neither be the Father nor the Son, there are at any rate three; yet, when it is asked, What three? straightway great poverty weighs upon human speech; yet we say, THREE PERSONS, not because that is what should be said, but that we may not keep silence."*

As this word was introduced, and continued to be employed, to express real distinctions in the Godhead, and in opposition to those who denied these distinctions, it may be well to approximate as nearly as we can to a definite meaning. But as no definition given has proved entirely satisfactory, it would be presumptuous in us to attempt a new or positive definition. The best perhaps that can be done, is to limit and qualify, as we are compelled to do with other terms expressive of the divine nature and attributes. The distinc-

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\* " *Quæcunque ergo, substantia Sermonis (τοῦ λόγου) sit, illum dico personam et illi nomen vindico: et dum Filium agnosco, secundum a patre defendo. . . . Tertius est Spiritus a Deo et Filio,"* etc.

tion involved, in the application of the term *person* to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, may be qualified.

#### I. NEGATIVELY.

1. *It is not the same as when applied to human beings.* We speak of Peter, James, and John as persons, in a sense different from what we do of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Each individual person of the human family differs from each other in many particulars, which is not true of the persons in the Godhead.

2. *It is not one of essence.* There is but one divine essence, and this essence is possessed in full by each person, so that in this respect, there is a perfect unity in the Godhead. God is not only one in opposition to polytheism, but as a pure, infinite Spirit, he is one in nature or essence.

3. *It is not one of attributes.* Each person in the Godhead possesses the same and equal attributes. No one possesses more or greater attributes than another. Each is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and truly divine.

4. *It is not merely nominal*—as when we apply different names or titles to the same person. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not different names for the same subsistence or person.

#### II. POSITIVELY.

1. *It is real.* The Father is not the Son, nor is the Son the Father. The Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. There is such a difference that there can be no interchange of these appellations, and there must be something immanent in the Godhead corresponding with such distinction of names.

2. It is such as to fully warrant the application of the personal pronouns, and other modes of address usually and clearly expressive of personal distinctions.

3. It is such as to involve different offices in the great work of salvation, so that each performs some office peculiar to that person, and which does not belong to any other.

4. It is such as to involve distinct, individual self-consciousness, with intelligent, voluntary, individual action.\*

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\* For an attempt to explain and define more philosophically *personality*, see Müller's *Lehre von der Sünde*, Vol. II.

After all, we see through a glass darkly.

Now these attempts to qualify and define may not throw much light on this profoundly mysterious subject, and we may add in the words of Chemnitz: "The persons are really distinguished, nevertheless in a manner to us incomprehensible and unknown."\* These terms and distinctions however may serve a good purpose, for it is a great matter, as Augustine says: "If you cannot find out what God is, nevertheless you may avoid thinking of him what he is not." The sense in which Melancthon employed the term may be further gathered from his own definition: "A person (as the Church uses the word in this Article) is an individual subsistence, intelligent and incommunicable."†

#### OPPOSING HERESIES CONDEMNED.

Besides thus setting forth the doctrine of the Godhead, according to the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed, the Reformers mentioned the most prominent errors to which it was opposed, and which are condemned by this Article. This served to put the truth confessed in a still clearer light, by enabling us to view it in contrast with opposing errors. "Every heresy," say they, "opposed to this Article is therefore condemned, as that of the Manichæans," etc. A brief notice of these heresies seems necessary to a proper elucidation of this Article, and yet it is almost impossible to say anything satisfactory, in so few words, upon so difficult and extensive a subject as these heresies present.‡

1. "*Manichæans*, who assume two principles, the one good, the other evil." This sect took its name from Manes or Mani, a Persian philosopher and religionist, who flourished in the third century. Much obscurity however rests upon the origin and history of the

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\* Loci Theologici, 37.

† *Persona, ut ecclesia in hoc articulo loquitur, est substantia individua, intelligens et incommunicabilis.*" Loci Communes.

Elsewhere Melancthon has "*Persona est substantia individua, intelligens, incommunicabilis, non sustentata in alia natura.*"

And "*ἡ ποστας αὐτὴν seu Persona est, subsistens, vivum, individuum, intelligens, incommunicabile, non sustentatum in aliis.*"

More may be seen on this subject in Chemnitz, Twesten, and Stuart.

‡ For a full account of the heresies mentioned in this Article, and of which only a very brief notice could be given here, the reader is referred to Walch's *Historie der Ketzereien*; to the Histories of Mosheim, Neander, Geiseler, and Schaff; and Hagenbach's History of Doctrine, and works there referred to.

Manichæan doctrine. Enough is known to understand that the whole system is utterly subversive of Christianity. Manes proposed to unite some elements of Christianity with Oriental philosophy and theology, and thus produced a strange compound of the most heterogeneous materials. Instead of one infinite, eternal essence, which alone is God, Manes held to two principles, the one good, the other evil, in perpetual conflict. His system ignores the great facts of Revelation, discarding the Old Testament, and explaining the New to suit his own doctrines. He denies the incarnation of the Son of God, leaves no place for an atonement, and claims himself to be the Paracletè promised by Christ. There could be no redemption by the blood of Christ, or regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit. It may seem strange that such a medley should gain any currency with thinking people, and yet succeeding Gnosticism, to which it was somewhat allied, it spread extensively and greatly corrupted the true doctrine. Even so great a mind as that of Augustine was for a time captivated by its pretences to unite philosophy and religion and teach the true way of life. But it could not permanently stand before the truth of the gospel, and is now numbered among exploded errors, that only served to bring out in brighter splendor the precious doctrines of divine revelation.

2. *Valentinians.* Valentinus lived in the second century, taught at Rome, and died at Cyprus, A. D. 160. He belonged to the Gnostic sect, and is considered as having given the most complete and complicated development of Gnostic ideas. This system, which exercised so mighty an influence on the doctrines, and occupies so wide a space in the history of that period, was heathen in its origin. It was a most vigorous attempt to unite pagan philosophy with Christian ideas, and produce one grand, harmonious system of philosophy and religion. "It is," says Schaff, "an attempt to solve some of the deepest metaphysical and theological problems. It deals with the grand antithesis of God and world, spirit and matter, idea and phenomenon; and endeavors to unlock the mystery of the origin of evil, and the whole question of the rise, development, and end of the world." Claiming a superior wisdom (γνώσις) it sought to explain away most of the simple, historical statements of the Bible. Like Manichæism, of which it was the forerunner, it held to two antagonistic principles. From God, as the primal being and source, proceed successive æons, which form the world of light.



To this matter is opposed, and presents the world of darkness. Between these there is incessant conflict. Christ himself is regarded as one, the most perfect, of these æons, seeking to overcome or win the darkness. There is left no place in this conglomerate system for the incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession of Christ. It is a vain attempt to marry a false philosophy to the true religion of the Bible. Against such efforts Paul may be understood as warning Timothy when he cautioned him not to "give heed to fables and endless genealogies," and "to avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science (*γνῶσις*) falsely so called."

3. *Arians*. Of Arius and his doctrine mention has already been made, and it seems unnecessary to dwell upon the subject again. The decision of the Council of Nice failed to check, or at least to stop, the spread of this heresy. Arius was recalled from banishment, and restored to his Church. His superiors in church authority refused to recognize him, and in the midst of the contest he suddenly died. After his death his views spread more rapidly than before, and for a century there was a struggle between the Nicene doctrine and Arianism for the supremacy, until at length the truth prevailed over error. Since the Reformation, Arianism appeared in England and on the Continent, but it has failed, as a system, to maintain a distinct place among other doctrines, and has gradually terminated in Socinianism and Unitarianism. It can hardly be said to have any existence at the present day, and its history teaches us that there is no medium between "honoring the Son as we honor the Father," and "denying the only Lord God, and Our Lord Jesus Christ."

4. *Eunomians*. Eunomius, from whom the name is derived, was a native of Cappadocia, and was somewhat conspicuous as a teacher of false doctrine during the fourth century. Trained under Arian teachers, he improved on their doctrines, and carried to the extreme this false system. Whilst Arius, and those agreeing with him, admitted that the Son was of like nature with the Father, Eunomius maintained that he was of a nature not only different, but dissimilar, and saw in him nothing but a created being. Of the Holy Ghost he taught still lower views. Maintaining the comprehensibility of God, and ridiculing the belief of what we cannot understand, he wholly rejected the divinity of the Son and the Spirit, and would not tolerate a trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence. Exalting as supreme the logical understanding, he may be



regarded as belonging to that class, who, claiming for themselves a monopoly of intelligence and reason, are called rationalists. He might find his appropriate place among the so-called "free-thinkers," or "liberal Christians," who pay more homage to their own reasonings than to the wisdom of God; and we may learn that modern rationalism is only repeating itself, and has nothing new or great of which to boast.

5. *Mahometans*. The followers of the false prophet. This system, of later origin, and continuing to the present day, is too well known to call for any extended notice. It is indeed the only one of the heresies mentioned in this Article, that can be truly said to continue its existence by name. The followers of Mahomet are still numbered by millions, and are among the most decided and inveterate enemies of the Christian faith. The one grand truth of this system is that there is but one true God, and Mahomet his prophet. Not in the orthodox, but in the Unitarian sense, they hold to the unity of God, and utterly deny the divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost. Of course it knows nothing of the incarnation, the atonement, redemption in the blood of the Lamb, or eternal life as the purchase of a Saviour's death. Its faith is Unitarian, its worship a slavish fear, and its influence deadening to all the finer sensibilities and to all man's sublimest hopes. It is enough to say that for lost man it has no Saviour.

6. *Samosatenians*, ancient and modern. The name derived from Paul of Samoseta, whose followers took the name in history of Samosatenians. All unite in representing him as worldly, ambitious, insolent and vain. He became bishop of Antioch, A. D. 260, and united with his care of the Church, a civil office. He was charged with heresy, and several Councils were called on his account. At length he was condemned and deposed, but his party continued to exist, under different names, until the fourth century, and the Reformers speak of modern Samosatenians. These latter are supposed to refer to Servetus and others, who were reviving and teaching the same doctrines. They deny the divinity and personality of the *Logos* and of the Holy Ghost regard Christ as a mere human being, and the Holy Ghost as only a divine influence or agency. Their condemnation, though it did not destroy the doctrine, yet aided in maintaining the true faith. Modern Unitarianism may be regarded as the genuine succession to Samosatenianism.

With individual peculiarities, all these different sects and heresies agree in maintaining false views of the Godhead, and especially of the true divinity of the Son, the proper personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, and the union of the three divine persons in the one ineffable essence. All had been condemned by the Church, as contrary to sound doctrine, and now the Reformers unite, with true believers of every age, in confessing the faith once delivered, and amid many conflicts still maintained, by the saints.

## II.

Having now presented the doctrine as contained in this ancient Creed, and confessed by the Reformers in the first Article of the Augsburg Confession, we proceed to inquire whether that doctrine is in harmony with "the only rule and standard, according to which all doctrines and teachers alike ought to be tried and judged." Is the doctrine confessed the doctrine of the Word of God? Are these two in such complete and perfect harmony that we may accept the one as confessing the faith in the other? We will endeavor to conduct the examination of this question in as simple a form, and as briefly as possible, necessarily confining ourselves to the most important proofs.

## UNITY.

I. In the Word of God we have clearly and emphatically taught the *unity* of the Godhead. This is so fundamental that we dare not allow any other view of God to contradict, or come in conflict with it. The Bible is irreconcilably opposed to every form of polytheism, and inculcates the worship of the one true and living God. Its decisive language is: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord," Deut. vi. 4; and, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," Ex. xx. 3. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me \* \* a just God and a Saviour," Is. xlv. 5, 21. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him," 1 Cor. viii. 6. "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all," Eph. iv. 6. It is needless, but would be easy, to multiply quotations of a similar character, both from the Old and New Testaments. God has revealed himself to us as One, a pure Spirit, infinite, eternal, omnipresent,

unchangeable, and by the very nature of his being excluding all other gods. As such he fills heaven and earth, "whom no man hath seen, nor can see," "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God," 1 Tim. i. 17.

## TRINITY.

2. Equally decisive is the same authority as to the distinction in the Godhead, and the existence of a trinity of persons, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In the Old Testament this doctrine is not so clearly revealed, yet there are announcements that involve the truth, and more than glimpses of what was to be fully developed, when the Only-begotten should come forth from the bosom of the Father. In this respect there is a perfect agreement between the gradual development of the doctrine of the Trinity, and that of the great doctrines of divine revelation. "Life and immortality," shadowed forth under the old dispensation, "are brought to light in the gospel." In the Old Testament, the Son and Spirit, as well as the Father, are spoken of, Ps. ii, Is. xlviii. 16, and forms of speech employed, pointing to the grand mystery of Trinity in Unity, Ps. xxxiii. 6, Num. vi. 23-26, Is. vi. 3. But in the New Testament we have clearer light upon this, as upon other doctrines. The very annunciation of the birth of Jesus, was that it should be through the Holy Ghost, and that he should "be called the Son of the Highest," Luke i. The mysterious child is "Immanuel, the Mighty God, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." When he was baptized, the Spirit of God, in a bodily form, descended upon him, and there was a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here is a distinct revelation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In those most wonderful discourses delivered to his disciples shortly before his death, and so fully preserved by John, we have a most ample statement of the distinction, and the relations existing, between the persons of the Sacred Trinity. The Father has sent forth the Son into the world, The Son had left the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and come to earth to suffer and die. He is about to return again to the Father, having accomplished his mission. But another will be sent, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who will abide with the disciples. Coming from the Father and the Son, he will guide them into all truth, John xiv. 15-26, xv. 26, xvi. 13, 15. When Christ commis-

sioned his apostles to disciple the nations, it was by preaching, and baptizing them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19. The apostolic benediction is in the name of the triune God, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Any attempt to explain these words of baptism and benediction, in any other way than that of admitting a trinity of persons, alike divine, must appear unnatural and absurd. The inspired apostles very repeatedly witness the same truth. Paul says, "For through him (Christ) we both have access by one *Spirit*, unto the *Father*," Eph. ii. 18. Again, speaking of the great salvation, "which at the first began to be spoken by the *Lord* (Jesus Christ), and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, *God* (the Father) also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the *Holy Ghost*," Heb. ii. 3, 4. Peter says, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father*, through sanctification of the *Spirit*, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ*," 1 Pet. i. 2. Language could not be plainer, and nothing but the supposed difficulty of admitting a trinity of persons in the Godhead could ever have started a doubt, or suggested any other interpretation as possible. If willing to receive the clear and manifold testimony of God's Word, we cannot doubt that in the unity of essence in the Godhead there is a trinity of persons.

#### DIVINITY.

3. In like manner may it be shown that to each of the three is ascribed absolute divinity. "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God."\* The proof on this point would be most complete and satisfactory by taking each person separately, but for the sake of brevity, and as amply sufficient, we will take the whole together.

(1) To each of the three persons the names or titles of divinity are applied. *a.* The Father, Deut. xxxii. 6; 1 Chron. xxix. 10; Is. lxiv. 8, lxiii. 16; Mal. i. 6, ii. 10; Rom. xv. 6; 1 Cor. viii. 6; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Gal. i. 3, 4; Eph. i. 1; Phil. i. 1; Col. i. 2; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1, 2; 2 John 3.

*b.* The Son. The most exalted name Jehovah. Jer. xxiii. 6; Is. lxi. 1, 8, 10; xi. 1-3, with John xii. 41. In the New Testament God and Lord. John i. 1, xx. 28; Acts xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim.

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\* Athanasian Confession.

iii. 16; Tit. ii. 13; 1 John v. 20; Heb. i. 8; Rev. xix. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 47; Acts x. 36; Rev. xvii. 14, xix. 16.

*c.* The Holy Ghost. Ex. xvii. 7, and Ps. xc. 7, 8, with Heb. iii. 7-11; 2 Sam. xxiii. 2; Acts v. 3, 4; 2 Cor. iii. 17.

(2) To each divine attributes are ascribed. Eternity. *a.* The Father. Deut. xxxiii. 27; Ps. xc. 2, xciii. 2; Is. lvii. 15; Hab. i. 12; 1 Tim. i. 17. *b.* The Son. Ps. xlv. 6; Is. ix. 6; Mic. v. 2; John i. 1, viii. 58, xvii. 5; Col. i. 17; Heb. xiii. 8; Rev. i. 17. *c.* The Holy Ghost. Heb. ix. 14.

Omnipresence. *a.* The Father. 1 Kings viii. 27; Jer. xxiii. 23, 24; Eph. i. 23. *b.* The Son. Matt. xviii. 20, xxviii. 20; John i. 18. *c.* The Holy Ghost. Ps. cxxxix. 7; 1 Cor. xii. 10-13.

Omniscience. *a.* The Father. Ps. cxlvii. 5; Is. xl. 28, xlvii. 9; Acts xv. 18; Heb. iv. 13. *b.* The Son. John xi. 25, xxi. 17; Rev. ii. 23; Acts i. 24. *c.* The Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11; John xiv. 26, xvi. 13.

Omnipotence. *a.* The Father. Gen. xvii. 1; Jer. xxxii. 17; Matt. xix. 26; Rev. xi. 17, xix. 6. *b.* The Son. Heb. i. 3; Is. ix. 6; Matt. xxviii. 18; Rev. i. 8. *c.* The Holy Ghost. Luke i. 35; Rom. xv. 19; Heb. ii. 4.

(3) To each divine works are attributed. Creation. *a.* The Father. Gen. i. 1; Neh. ix. 6; Is. xlii. 5; Heb. iii. 4; Rev. iv. 11. *b.* The Son. John i. 3, 10; Col. i. 16, 17; Eph. iii. 9; Heb. i. 2, 10. *c.* The Holy Ghost. Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13; Ps. xxxiii. 6, civ. 30.

Preservation and Providence. *a.* The Father. Neh. ix. 6; Job xii. 10; Ps. xxxiii. 6; Acts xvii. 26-28; Ps. civ. 14, 15, 21, 27, 28; Matt. v. 45, vi. 26-30. *b.* The Son. Heb. i. 3; Col. i. 17; Matt. xxviii. 18; Is. ix. 7; 1 Thess. iii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Rev. xi. 15. *c.* The Holy Ghost. Ps. civ. 30.

Redemption and Salvation. *a.* The Father. John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9; Is. lxiii. 16, xlv. 21. *b.* The Son. Matt. i. 21; Rom. iii. 24; Eph. i. 7; Heb. ix. 12; Acts iv. 12; Heb. ii. 10; John iv. 42; 1 John iv. 14. *c.* The Holy Ghost. Heb. ix. 14; Tit. iii. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Rom. v. 5; 1 Pet. i. 2.

(4) To each divine honors and worship are ascribed. *a.* The Father. Deut. xxxii. 6; Is. lxiv. 8; Matt. vi. 9; Rom. viii. 15, 16. *b.* The Son. John v. 22, 23; Acts vii. 59, 60; 1 Cor. i. 2; Phil. ii. 9, 10; Heb. i. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rev. i. 5, 6, v. 11, 12, vii. 10. *c.* The Holy Ghost. Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Rev. i. 4, 5.



These passages, which might be greatly multiplied, prove that the Word of God reveals to us Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as divine, possessing the names, attributes, works and worship, which belong to God alone.

#### PERSONALITY.

4. That each possesses a distinct subsistence, which we designate by the term *person*, may also be shown. We will not here attempt any further explanation of the term itself, but offer some of the proof for the existence of that which is expressed by the word persons.

(1) The names, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are used together in such a way that no one could be exchanged for the other, or understood in any other way than as distinct subsistences or persons. And this not once or twice, but again and again. No rule or principle of interpretation will allow us to understand these names, when thus used, in any other sense than that of belonging to persons or subsistences differing the one from the other. Each possesses the attributes most distinctive of personality, as intelligence, self-consciousness, volition and voluntary action. Matt. xxviii. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Eph. ii. 18.; 1 Pet. i. 2.

(2) The personal pronouns, I, thou, he, are used by Christ when speaking of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in such a way as must involve personal distinctions. In John (chaps. xiv.-xvii.) we find him repeatedly addressing the Father in the second person, "thou, thine, thee;" and also speaking of the Holy Ghost in the third person, "he," as distinct both from the Father and himself. "Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee." "I have glorified thee on the earth, and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Words could not be plainer, and whatever difficulty we may have in fathoming the depth of mysterious meaning, we dare not set aside the simple truth, or refuse to believe because we cannot fully comprehend.

(3) Each performs offices distinctive of personality. The Father, moved by compassionate love, sends his Son into the world. He commended his love by this wonderful gift. The Son came forth, from the bosom of the Father, to seek and to save that which was



lost. After dying on the cross, and rising from the dead, he returned to the Father to present his own infinite sacrifice, and to intercede for the guilty. Because he lives to make intercession with the Father, sinners can come to the throne of grace with boldness in his name. The Holy Spirit comes to take and apply the redemption purchased by the Son through his sufferings and death. "He shall receive of mine," said the Saviour, "and shall show it unto you." "He shall glorify me." While the Spirit enlightens and renews, the Son intercedes with the Father, and the Father receives those who come unto him through the Son. John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8; Luke xix. 10; Rom. iv. 25; John xvi. 14, 15; Heb. vii. 25; Rev. xxii. 17.

(4) Of each are many additional things predicated, showing distinction and personality. We can only mention a very few. The Son (*Logos*) was in the beginning with God (a difference of person), and was God (unity of essence). He says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father," John xvi. 28. To the Father the Son declares: "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world," John xvii. 24. The Father "hath committed all judgment unto the Son," John v. 22. Against the Holy Ghost there is a blasphemy, distinguishing it from other sins against the Father and the Son, and distinguishing him from the other persons of the Trinity, Matt. xii. 31. The Holy Spirit is grieved, which can only be true of a Being possessed of personality.

Indeed, the evidence is so abundant, so varied, and so complete, that the only difficulty, in a brief presentation, is to select and arrange. To exhibit all the testimony of the Bible on this subject would be to present no small part of the New Testament, for it abounds with the proof of the unity and trinity of the Godhead, and of the supreme divinity and distinct personality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Beyond all controversy there is fully grounded in the divine Word the doctrine of the Church, as contained in the statement of the Athanasian Symbol: "*This is the Catholic faith: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the essence.*"

## APOSTOLIC FATHERS.

The testimony of the Word of God will satisfy those who receive its authority as infallible. As a matter of pure revelation, this is sufficient, and should make "an end of all strife," except with such as will not submit their reason to the wisdom of God. But it may help to confirm our interpretation of that Word, as well as to assure us of a common faith with the apostolic Church, to adduce also the testimony of the immediate successors of the inspired apostles. They would not be likely to err on so vital a subject as this, and would know from personal intercourse with the apostles the truths they inculcated.

The scholastic definitions and theological terms of a later age were not in use at this time, but that they acknowledged and worshipped the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is beyond all controversy or doubt. And that whilst they believed in the one true and living God, they also believed in a distinction between the Father and the Son and the Spirit, is equally clear. To each they ascribed true and proper divinity, without any attempt to define or explain.

Very frequently is Christ spoken of as "*God*," and as "our God," and that he was worshipped as God, we have the well-known testimony even of Pliny, in addition to their own writings. We will limit ourselves to a few passages bearing more directly upon the Trinity.

1. Clement, of whom Paul makes mention (Phil. iv. 3), asks: "Have we not one God, and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace, who is poured out upon us, and one calling in Christ?" Ep. i. 46.

2. Polycarp, the disciple and companion of John, according to the testimony of the epistle of the church of Smyrna, besides recognizing Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in his prayer at the stake, closed with the glowing words; "For this, and for all things, I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son; with whom, to thee and the Holy Ghost, be glory, both now and to all succeeding ages. Amen." Ep. xiv. The same distinct rendering of divine homage to the triune God follows at the close of this epistle.

3. Ignatius, also the disciple of John and friend of Polycarp, in

his epistle to the Magnesians, says, "Study that whatsoever ye do \* \* ye may prosper both in body and in spirit, in faith and charity, in the Son, and in the Father, and in the Holy Ghost," Ep. xiii. The account of his martyrdom, professedly by eye-witnesses, closes with: "Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom, and with whom, be glory and power to the Father, with the Holy Ghost forever. Amen."\*

It would be easy to produce like testimonies from others immediately following, but we deem these sufficient for our purpose. They show how holy men of God, who conversed and lived with the apostles of the blessed Saviour, understood this momentous subject, and prove the truth of Tertullian's declaration, that this had been the faith from the beginning. It is barely conceivable, but by no means credible, that men like Polycarp, who told of his intercourse with John and with the rest who had seen the Lord, and what he had heard from them, respecting the Lord, His miracles and his doctrine, could have been mistaken; and that they recognized and worshipped the triune God is beyond a doubt.

#### ALLEGED OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

Objections have been repeated from age to age against this doctrine of the Christian faith. It is of the utmost importance to the cause of truth, and to the stability of our faith, to note whence these objections arise, and what is the precise point against which their force lies. And we think we are not mistaken in saying, that these objections have their origin in the difficulties which meet us in our attempts to comprehend this mysterious subject, and to effect an adjustment between the different statements of the Bible and our own reasonings upon them. The force of these objections is not so much against the evidence for each separate part of the doctrine, as against the doctrine as a whole, or that adjustment of the separate parts into one rounded system, which has received the endorsement of the Church. We believe there never would have been a single objection raised against this doctrine, had it not been supposed to conflict with other doctrines, and to be at war with human reason. It was not the insufficient evidence of any particular part, that started men to doubt and object, but the difficulty of receiving evi-

dence to prove what was imagined to be unreasonable or impossible; and hence the effort to get rid of the evidence by explaining it away, or denying its force. It will hardly be pretended by any one that Christ is not called God in the Scriptures, or that there is lacking any proof that could be presented to establish the doctrine of His proper and supreme divinity. The same thing may be said of the Holy Ghost. Each person in the Godhead has every title, attribute, work, and honor that belongs to God, and this cannot be denied. But reason is at once staggered to know how these three can be one God, or how we can reconcile the doctrine of the Trinity with the universally recognized truth among believers in a divine revelation, the unity of the Godhead.

Now to those who receive the testimony of God's Word as sufficient and infallible, it must be a very great relief to know that the difficulty is not with any deficiency or want of clearness in the evidence, but in our endeavoring to adjust the different parts so as to constitute an intelligent and consistent whole. The one part is clear enough, the evidence not only sufficient, but accumulating and overpowering. The other may be very dark and mysterious.

Now the true province of reason in such a case is to examine and weigh the testimony, to determine its sufficiency and what it does prove. It is not bound to reconcile all difficulties, apparent or real, in a divine revelation, and to make everything harmonize with its conclusions. We may not indeed, and cannot, be required to receive in a divine revelation what is clearly contradictory, or palpably absurd. God's revelation to man never can contradict His revelation in man. But we may be, and are, required to receive much that we cannot fully comprehend, that is above, though not contrary to our reason. Such we believe, in some of its aspects, to be the doctrine of the Trinity. It is above our reason. We cannot, even by the most diligent searching, find out God. The knowledge is too wonderful for us: we cannot attain to it.

This may prepare us to look more calmly at some of the alleged difficulties and objections, and we may discover that they result from our inability fully to comprehend the subject, and that they are not peculiar to this doctrine alone, nor even to theology, but as Sir William Hamilton truly observes: "No difficulty emerges in theology, which has not previously emerged in philosophy."

The most current and plausible objections to this doctrine are such as the following:

I. That a trinity of persons is inconsistent with the unity of the Godhead. We are told that unity and trinity cannot be true of the same Being, and that it is as absurd as to maintain that one can be three, or three one. Those who hold to a trinity of persons are charged with tri-theism. This objection, almost as old as Christianity, is repeated with as much confidence as though it were self-evident, and need only be stated to be admitted; and though answered a thousand times, is still paraded as unanswerable.

We readily admit that nothing can be received, even from a divine revelation, that contradicts our intuitive belief or necessary judgment. We cannot be made to believe that two and two are five, nor can we believe that one is three in the sense that it is one. One is one, and can be neither more nor less, and so of three.

It can hardly be necessary to say that no orthodox believer has ever been guilty of the folly of maintaining that one is three, or three one, in the same sense.\* We do not affirm unity and trinity of the same thing, but of what is entirely different. We affirm unity of the very nature, or being, or essence of God—that it is one—and that in that sense, he is absolutely one God, and that besides him there is none else. But in this one God, one in essence and being, we affirm a trinity of subsistences or persons, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, co-eternal and co-equal. And as we affirm unity and trinity, not at all of the same subject, but the one of the very essence, and the other of personal distinctions or subsistences in that essence, it is not, and cannot be shown to be contradictory. Whatever difficulties there may be about the divine personality, and the existence of a three-fold personality in the divine unity, (and we do not attempt to deny them,) he would gain little credit for his logic who would undertake to affirm that it involves a contradiction in terms.

Various analogies have been employed, drawn from man's own spiritual nature, and from objects in the world around us, to illustrate this subject, and to aid in removing the apparent difficulties. The most profound thinkers the world has ever known, from Plato to the present day, have indeed maintained, on philosophical grounds, the doctrine of a trinity, as the truest and most exalted conception

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\* Augustine says, "*Unde non audemus dicere unam essentiam, tres substantias, sed unam essentiam (vel substantiam), tres personas.*"



of the one true and living God.\* However ingenious and striking some of these speculations and illustrations may be, our faith does not rest on them, but on the divine Word. That Word does not, and cannot, contradict itself, and there are analogies enough, combined with the best efforts of human reason, to reconcile every candid mind to this incomprehensible mystery in the being of God.

2. That three persons, each possessing all the attributes of infinite Being, cannot co-exist; or that there cannot be more than one infinite Being. The co-existence of more than one infinite Being is

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\* For the Pagan doctrine of a Trinity, see Cudworth's *Int. Syst.* Along with much that is curious and learned, the author says, "But, besides this advantage from the ancient Pagan Platonists and Pythagoreans admitting a Trinity with their theology, in like manner as Christianity doth (whereby Christianity was the more recommended to the philosophic Pagans), there is another advantage of the same extending even to this present time, probably not unintended also by Divine Providence; that whereas bold and conceited wits, precipitately condemning the doctrine of the Trinity for nonsense, absolute repugnancy to human faculties, and impossibility, have thereupon some of them quite shaken off Christianity, and all revealed religion, professing only Theism; others have frustrated the design thereof, by paganizing it into creature-worship or idolatry; this ignorant or conceited confidence of both may be returned, and confuted from hence, because the most ingenious and acute of all the Pagan philosophers, the Platonists and Pythagoreans, who had no bias at all upon them, nor any Scripture revelation that might seem to impose upon their faculties, but followed the free sentiments and dictates of their own minds, did notwithstanding not only entertain this trinity of Divine hypostases eternal and uncreated, but were also fond of the hypothesis, and make it a main fundamental of their theology." Vol. II, 25.

It is well known that many of the most distinguished philosophers and divines of Germany have maintained a trinity in the Godhead as a matter of philosophic and theistic speculation; and that according to Julius Müller, "This problem" (of the divine personality) "only becomes solved by the idea of the *Divine Trinity*."

Coleridge declares: "I am clearly convinced, that the Scriptural and only true idea of God will, in its development, be found to involve the idea of the Trinity."—*Aids to Reflection*.

Morrell says: "Philosophy has not repudiated the existence of those diversities in the Divine unity, the reflection of which there is in man himself. The spiritual vision, even of some heathen minds, did not fail to see in the infinite being that blending of unity and plurality, which is the type of all perfection; and to the Christian idealist, the mystery of a Trinity has rarely proved a stone of stumbling, or a rock of offence."—*Hist. Philos.*, 703.

Much more of the same character might be adduced, and may be placed as an offset to those who talk about the *unreasonableness* of this doctrine.



supposed to involve an impossibility. We reply first, that we only maintain and teach one, so far as absolute being or essence is concerned. We utterly deny the existence of three infinite beings, as separate and independent existences, involving as it must three Gods. Against any such view the orthodox faith has always presented the most decided opposition. But secondly, as really held and understood, there is no greater difficulty on this point, than meets us elsewhere, as in a number of divine attributes, "each infinite in its kind, and yet all together constituting but one infinite," or in the co-existence of an infinite Being, and an unlimited number of finite beings. This is just the point at which Pantheism stumbles and takes refuge in the one universal substance. Any one who has duly reflected upon this subject will be satisfied that the difficulties he encounters are only such as are common to any and every attempt to fathom the mysterious depths of the finite and the infinite, or to explore the essence and perfections of God.\*

3. That as the Son is *begotten*, and the Holy Spirit *proceeds* from the Father and the Son, the Father must exist prior to the Son, and both must be anterior to the Spirit—that these three persons cannot be co-eternal, since the very terms employed to express the relations existing between them indicate priority and succession. Here again the difficulty results from applying to the Godhead terms with the same conceptions as when applied to things temporal and changeable. Among human beings, where there is a continual succession, one must precede another, and one is older than another. But this is not so with God. From everlasting to everlasting he is the same. Time has no application to him. He is no older now than eternal ages ago, nor will eternal ages to come make any change in his being. "The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Ghost is eternal," says the Athanasian Creed, and so says the Word of God; and this is just as comprehensible as the existence of one eternal essence. Among mortals, as Bishop Pearson says, "the father necessarily precedeth the son, and begetteth one younger than himself. \* \* \* But this presupposeth the imperfection of mortality wholly to be removed, when we speak of him who inhabiteth eternity; the essence which God always had

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\* See Mansel's *Limits of Religious Thought*, 164, 165; McCosh's *Intuitions of the Mind*, 415.

without beginning, without beginning he did communicate; being always Father, as always God."

The eternal generation of the Son, and procession of the Spirit, find their parallel difficulties in the existence of substance and its properties. The latter are conceived of as derived and dependent on the substance in which they inhere, and yet they are co-existent, the one as old as the other. We cannot conceive of substance without its properties, and yet we consider the one as derived from the other. The same may be said of the sun and its rays. The rays of light proceed from the sun, or are caused by the great luminary, and yet there was no time in its existence when it was without rays. Mind and thought may be regarded as still more strikingly analogous. Thought is the product of mind, and yet the mind cannot be conceived of as existing without thinking at the same time. It is needless to multiply or extend these analogies. Our position is this. We have abundant evidence from the Word of God, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are eternal, and no difficulty about words expressing the relations existing between these persons, can be allowed to shake our faith. Were we to do so, we must for the same reason give up much of our boasted philosophy.

What has been said has not been presented as any explanation of this inscrutable mystery, but as some answer to those who raise objections against what they cannot comprehend, and hasten to pronounce it absurd or impossible. With Barrow we say, "That there is one Divine Nature or Essence, common unto three persons incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different from the other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession, without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence;—these are notions which may well puzzle our reason, in conceiving how they agree, but should not stagger our faith in assenting that they are true; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with dispositions to admire, veiling our faces in the

presence, and prostrating our reason at the feet of wisdom so far transcending us." \*

## CONCLUSION.

The doctrine of this Article, though profoundly mysterious, and in some of its aspects bewildering to human reason, yet not only rests on the sure warrant of God's Word, but is one of deep, practical importance, both to understanding the plan of redemption, and to the work of our personal salvation. It were a great mistake to regard it as merely an abstruse speculation in Theology, and fitted only for the discussion of the schools. The humblest Christian needs to understand, not indeed the scholastic terms and various speculations with which this doctrine has been encumbered, but the way of salvation as provided by the Father, prepared and made attainable by the Son, and applied and sealed by the Holy Ghost. Without this knowledge of the triune God, we cannot understand how the redemption of an apostate and guilty world could be possible; and just in proportion as we shut out the light from this quarter do we obscure the whole scheme of human redemption; while on the other hand, as we receive and embrace the truth, seeking to be guided by it, light will shine upon the way of our reconciliation to the Father, through the death and intercession of the Son, and of our preparation for divine fellowship and the heavenly inheritance, through sanctification of the Spirit. The truth and force of this will be seen by a glance at a few of the great fundamental doctrines of salvation.

I. *The Incarnation.* This lies at the very basis of redemption. It is a felt want of man's religious nature, and enters in some sense into most leading systems of religion. Without it God remains at infinite distance from man, and there is no possibility of satisfaction for sin, or of union between the creature and the Creator. But we have no reasonable account of any incarnation except that revealed in the Bible, where the eternal Word becomes flesh, and the mysterious Being, who tabernacles among men, is Immanuel—God with us. The whole Trinity unite in this wonder of heaven and earth. God sends forth his own Son, made of a woman, made under the law—the angel announces to the Virgin, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow

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\* Barrow's Works, Vol. II, 150.

thee; therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." The Son himself witnessed, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." We have then the Son of God, through the coöperation of the entire Godhead, becoming incarnate, "God manifest in the flesh." And wherever this distinction has been denied, or the doctrine of God incarnate rejected, there the whole doctrine of redemption through the Son has fallen with it.

2. *The Atonement.* That God may be just and justify the sinner, an atonement is necessary. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Divine justice must be satisfied. The law must be magnified and made honorable in the eyes of all creatures. Sin must be punished and made abominable. Every demand on the part of a holy and just, yet merciful God, and also on the part of sinful, guilty men, must be fully met. Who will pay the ransom? Who will make atonement for human guilt, and procure pardon and peace? No created, dependent being could do this. Not silver or gold could pay the ransom, or blood of lambs wash away sin. God's own Son must suffer and die. The sword must awake against the man that is fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Christ Jesus must agonize and expire on the cross that he may bear our sins in his own body on the tree. His sufferings and death, as the God-man, make a full atonement, and the only atonement, for perishing sinners. But without the divinity and personality of the Son, how could he give "himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor?" Or how could "the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Deny the doctrine of the Trinity, and you deny the offering of the Son of God, through the Eternal Spirit, the only acceptable atonement, through which the Father can pardon and receive penitent sinners unto favor, and make them heirs of life.

3. *Regeneration.* Man needs regeneration just as much as redemption. His powers are as depraved as his soul is guilty. He can no more create within himself a new heart than he can pardon his own sins. He not only needs divine grace, and divine assistance, he needs the renewing of the Holy Ghost. He must be born again of the Spirit, or he can never see the Kingdom of God. The Spirit coming from the Father and the Son, takes of the things of Christ,

reveals to the soul the hidden things of God, convinces of sin, creates anew the heart, and transforms the whole spiritual man into the likeness of Jesus Christ. Thus redeemed unto God by the blood of the Lamb, and renewed by the Spirit, believers become the peculiar possession of Christ, "an holy temple in the Lord, in whom," says Paul, they "are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Now all this is illustrated in the work of each individual's salvation, and without it, his salvation must be to us absolutely inconceivable. The Father draws the sinner to himself, but he can only come to the Father through the Son, by "the new and living way" prepared through his shed blood and continued intercession. By the "renewing of the Holy Ghost," he receives power to draw nigh, that he may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus.

And thus will each soul, ransomed from the power of sin and Satan, unite with the Church of all ages in ascribing the glory of salvation to the Father who has loved, and to the Son who was redeemed, and to the Holy Spirit who has sanctified—three persons in one God—to whom "be glory and majesty, dominion and power, now and ever. Amen."



## ARTICLE II.

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# ORIGINAL SIN.

BY S. SPRECHER, D. D. LL.D.

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“Our churches likewise teach, that since the fall of Adam, all men who are naturally engendered are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God or confidence towards him, and with sinful propensities; and that this disease, or original sin, is truly sin, and still condemns and causes eternal death to those who are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit.

“They condemn the Pelagians and others, who deny that natural depravity is sin, and who, to the disparagement of the glory of Christ’s merits and benefits, contend that man may be justified before God by the powers of his own reason.”

THE subject of the second Article of the Augsburg Confession is one of the most important and difficult within the whole range of theological thought. The connection of the fall of Adam with the universality of sin in his posterity, though always shrouded in mystery for human speculation, will never lose its practical bearing upon human conduct.

The Confession itself is the expression of a renewed experience of the great facts of sin and grace—a re-assertion of the cardinal doctrines of the gospel. The statements in this Article are evidently made in the interest of the great subject of gratuitous justification and sanctification, through the mediation of the blessed Saviour and the agency of the Holy Spirit. Luther was led, by personal experience, down into the depths of consciousness, where the thoughts accuse, or excuse, one another, and up to the heights of divine light, where the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men. The sinfulness and condemnation, the helpless guilt and hopeless depravity of man, were to him



facts of consciousness; the freeness and fulness of the divine salvation, matters of personal experience. As his experience was of the same marked kind with that of Augustine, so is there a similarity between his anthropological views and those of this distinguished father in the Church. And as the Reformation started from a practical point of view, so is the Augsburg Confession a practical expression of the cardinal doctrines involved in this great spiritual revolution of Christendom.

The Papacy had appropriated the ecclesiastical errors of Augustine and the anthropological errors of Pelagius. The scholastic theology had degenerated into the superstition of the Augustinian ecclesiasticism, and the scepticism of the Pelagian anthropology—the mere *opus operatum* of the one, and the mere external morality of the other. The Reformers rejected the errors of both; but they adopted the great fundamentals of the Augustinian anthropology. A deep consciousness of sin led Luther to receive the doctrine of organic connection with Adam in the fall; to pronounce natural depravity a positive corruption of human nature, an inborn enmity to God; to ascribe to man, as the consequence of it, an entire impotency to the divine life, a helpless exposure to the divine wrath—and from it, as the root, to derive all other sins. Hence the Augsburg Confession describes the state into which men, by natural propagation, are born, as the want of the fear of God and of confidence in God, and the presence of evil lust (*concupiscentia*); and regards this mass of corruption, as really sin, on account of which all who are not born again by baptism and the Holy Ghost, are condemned, and liable to eternal punishment.

The article requires attention to the *origin, the contents, the character, the consequences*, of this sin.

1. The *origin* of it, is clearly indicated in the name by which they designate it: *Peccatum Originis—Erbsuende*. By this they mean the one original sin—the sin of origin—the inherited sin—the sin transmitted to us with the human nature—the sin received with the origin of our being. In teaching the fundamental doctrine of the Latin anthropology, they naturally use the words of Augustine, by whom it received its full enunciation. Pelagius said, that all good and evil—all praise-worthiness or blame-worthiness is in actual sin—is in actual obedience or transgression. Sin, therefore, cannot come by birth, but only from acts of free-will. Adam could not originate sin, once

for all; but each individual sinner must originate the first sin in his own case—the first sin of *the human nature which is in him*. Augustine, on the contrary, said, that Adam, in his free self-determination, had by one sin—a peculiar sin—a sin which only the Protoplast, the First Man, could commit—a sin which could never have been committed by any of his successors in human nature—a sin which could not be repeated even by himself—a sin of which his subsequent acts of transgression, and the sins of other men, are only manifestations and developments;—had, by this one act, corrupted the human nature which was in his person, and which is in all the individuals of his posterity. It is, therefore, *Peccatum Originis—Erbsuende*—the first sin in the world, the first sin in every man; the sin inherited from Adam, by every individual man, naturally engendered “since the fall.” By *Peccatum Originis* they point to the mode and character of the origin of individual men, since the fall, as distinguished from that *Jusitia Originis*, with which the individual Adam, and the human nature which was in him, came originally from the hand of God; the former, by generation, from the sinful Adam; the latter, by creation, from the holy God—the one sinful, the other holy. This sin did not begin with the origin of the human nature itself in creation. Man, generically and individually, was created holy; human nature, as a species, was created holy, and it was good, as it existed in individuals by creation; Adam was created righteous and Eve was created pure, out of the holy human nature which was in Adam. The Confessors would distinguish, with Augustine, between substance and quality in human nature, regarding the former, as coming from the immediate agency of God; the latter, as resulting from the free act of man—would, with the framers of the Formula of Concord at a later day, have declared original sin an accident, inseparable, indeed, during the period between the sinful birth on earth, and the holy glorification in heaven, but still only an accident to human nature, and not a constituent element of its substance. Hence they do not call it *Peccatum naturale*, nor *Peccatum naturæ*, but *Peccatum Originis*. They refer not to the mere fact of the possession of the common human nature; for that, being the result of creation, is good; nor to the mere fact of the possession of an individual human nature, for this, also, is a pure creation of God in the first individuals; but to the manner in which, since the fall, all men become partakers of the common

human nature, and receive their individual being—to the fact that all men naturally engendered, since the fall, spring not by creation, but by birth from the human nature which, in and through Adam, apostatized, after it had been created in righteousness and true holiness. This is the *Peccatum Originis*, the beginning and the source of all sin. This distinction is made still more clear by the phrase, “Since the fall of Adam”—no sin in created man *before*; nothing but sin, in the generated man, while unregenerate, *after*. It is, indeed, *Peccatum Originis*—*Erbsuende*—for it is inherited, received at the moment of our origin—received with nature, not merely in connection with nature, or without the corruption of nature, but in such a way that it is inherent in our nature. We received it from our progenitors, they from theirs, and so on, back through all generations, until we come to Adam, who inherited nothing, and especially no sin; for he had neither father nor mother—was created, and created holy. Adam could not inherit sin from him who made him; for God would not originate sin, and he could not create it. Man, the free creature, could, and, by an act of self-determination, did originate sin, and entailed it, with its consequence, death, upon all his children. They are heirs, and it is the sin in which he involved himself and the entire human nature which was in him, that is the deplorable heritage which they all have received. “Since the fall, all men naturally engendered are born in sin;” they do not and cannot originate sin; only Adam could originate it, and only by that one sin. Not from the state of the human nature before the fall, which Adam received holy from the hand of creation, which he should have propagated holy, and which, but for that one sin, he would have propagated holy; not from the state of the human nature in which men would have been, if Adam had not fallen; but in consequence of the state of the human nature: “Since the fall of Adam, all men, naturally engendered, are begotten and born in sin;” have inherited from that original progenitor, an “inherent disease and natural depravity; are full of evil lust and inclination, destitute of true fear of God, and of true faith in him;” and are immutably fixed in this lamentable condition, until haply they “are born again by baptism and the Holy Ghost.”

2. What are the *contents* of this original sin—this inherited depravity?

The Confessors present these in a positive and a privative form.

They distinguish between something inhering in man, which he ought not to have, and something which he ought to have, but which he has not. Positively, they say: "All men from their birth are full of evil lust and inclination (*concupiscentia*);" and privatively, "They can, by nature, have no true fear of God, and no true confidence in him."

Let us notice first the positive, in the material of natural depravity. By *Lust und Neigung* in the German, and *Concupiscentia*, in the Latin copy, they do not mean any actual sins, either in thought, feeling or action; but something back of these, and which is their source. They here again call attention to the one original and originating sin. To us it seems strange, that these words should generally have been translated as if, in the original, they were used in the plural, instead of the singular number. They do not mean any individual and constitutional desires of human nature (for these were originally bestowed in creation); nor the perverted and polluted exercise of these propensities, as distinguishable and separable from the *Lust, Neigung* or *Concupiscentia*; but the perverted and polluted exercise of these desires and propensities, as invariably the result of that innate depravity, which they designate particularly by the use, in the singular number, of each and all of these words. They mean that the normal state of man is, to have the power and the exercise of the power to fear and trust God, and to keep all the faculties and impulses of his nature in a state of obedience to the divine Law—and that in his depravity he has lost this power. In his original state, he possessed and exercised it; and though the possession and exercise of it were gifts of the creative hand, yet was it a free power and a free exercise. Adam was most free in his most perfect obedience; but as he was free, he could, in his own self-determination, lose this power to control his constitutional appetites and desires, and to love and fear his God; and the act, by which he would lose it, would also induce a sinful and ruling inclination, as a permanent source of the sinful exercise of all his constitutional faculties and susceptibilities. To such an inherent depravity, which has taken the place of the holy disposition with which man was created, they refer in the use of the words *Lust, Neigung, Concupiscentia*. Hence, when their Romish opponents undertook to construe this Article, so as to make these words mean particular and individual evil desires—which are actual sins—they declare, in the Apology, that it

is a *false interpretation* of the meaning of the words of the Article, when their opponents say, "That to be without the fear of God, and without faith in him, is a charge of actual sins;" and appeal to the German copy to show that they deny "To all who are born according to the sensual nature, not only the exercise, but the ability—the gift to produce, &c." "We say, namely, that man so born, has the evil inclination, and cannot produce, &c." "In this sense, the Latin also denies to nature the capacity, that is the gift and power to effect, &c." "As by the expression evil desire, we mean not only effects or fruits, but a perduring inclination of nature." "These are the reasons why, in the description of original sin, we both mentioned the evil inclination, and denied to the natural powers of man, fear and confidence towards God. We wished to call attention to the fact, that original sin embraces all these, ignorance of God, contempt of God, want of fear before God, and of confidence toward him—the *inability* to love God." "The same thing lies in the definition of Augustine, who is in the habit of so defining original sin, as to make it the *evil inclination*" \* \* which "*came in, after the loss of righteousness.*"

They evidently mean something different from a natural faculty or constitutional tendency, which comes from the creative hand—something, which man could superinduce upon his constitution, and which he did superinduce, in the Fall—something, consequently, which is blameworthy and not indifferent, as would be a normal susceptibility or infirmity; hence they say, in the Apology: "Augustine has refuted \* \* the opinion \* \* that this inclination is no fault in man; but rather something morally indifferent, as we call bodily pain or sickness *adiaphoron*." From this it is clear, that, though the distinction between the spiritual and the organic or constitutional in man was not then, as fully, in consciousness, or in science as it is, at this day, they yet meant by *Concupiscentia*, *Lust*, *Neigung*, a spiritual inclination which, being sinful, vitiates all the thoughts, feelings and actions of men. Hence, they could consistently declare that acts good in themselves, when performed by unregenerate men, were destitute of true virtue. We have many actual desires, and these, under the influence of original sin, are actual sins; but they are not the *Concupiscentia*—the natural depravity. This is a different kind of lust, a lust which excites in us all kinds of lusts. In point of permanency, indeed, it is like these



constitutional desires; like the animal appetites, it may not always be in consciousness, though always present. As the immoderate and sinful appetites for food and drink, in the glutton and the drunkard, or the immoderate and sinful desires for property, in the miser and the spendthrift, reveal their permanency by the invariability of their excitement on the presentation of their objects; so a disposition or inclination to that which is forbidden by the Divine law, lies back of all the thoughts, feelings and actions of men, and manifests its permanence, as a source of motive, by the universality of human sinfulness. The Confessors say consequently, in the Apology: "We speak of an inborn evil disposition of the heart, not of actual guilt and sin—for we say that, in all the children of Adam, there is an evil lust and inclination;" that is, one comprehensive inclination to all that which is contrary to the law of God. In this sense also, they supply the word "full." As we say of a glutton or a drunkard, he is full of the desire for food or drink, meaning that this desire monopolizes the action of all his faculties; so when they say that all men in the state of natural depravity are *full* of evil lust and inclination, they mean that there is in them a full source of motive, an exhaustless fountain of evil impulses, so vitiating all the actions of all the faculties of mind and body, that all the desires of man, which should go out after God and spiritual good, tend to nothing but the transgression of God's law and the pursuit of all evil. It is an abiding disposition, producing a governing purpose against holiness, and for sin.

But the Confessors pass from a positive to a privative view of the contents of original sin. They say, that: "Since the fall of Adam all men naturally engendered, were born without fear of God or confidence towards him;" that is, there is not only the presence of sin, but the absence of holiness. This they treat as a real want. Now a real want consists not simply in the absence of a thing, but in the absence of a thing which should be present. The destitution of the fear of God and of confidence toward him, is not simply the absence of something, but the absence of something that should be present in man. They speak consequently, not merely negatively, but privatively. The normal condition of man demands the presence of that which is now absent, by birth, from the souls of all men. The absence of the fear of God and of confidence in him, from an irrational animal, is not a real want, because the presence of



them is not required by the normal state of its being; but in a rational being it is such, because without the presence of these qualities he is not what he is required, by his entire constitution and all his relations, to be. This destitution is as real a departure from the original and proper state of man, as would be the absence of reason. As a spiritual being he must as necessarily have the exercise of Divine fear and confidence, in order to be what he ought to be, as he must possess reason, in order to be what he ought to be. Though the power and the exercise of the power to be in this condition is free, yet he cannot be created without the immediate presence of both; because such is the nature of his being and relations, that he cannot properly be in a state of either opposition or indifference toward God. There may not properly elapse a single moment from his creation, without his fearing and trusting God; it is a quality inseparable from the proper state of his being, to be determined from the very beginning for God and right—he must be created, if he is to have being at all, in righteousness and true holiness. Men ought to fear God and trust Him—should have and should exercise this inclination—should have both natural and moral ability to do this; they had it in their first estate, they should have it now; and as they have it not, they are in a state of the greatest possible want. This aspect of the subject the Confessors present especially, in contrast with prevalent Romish views. “This we have added,” says the Apology, “viz.: that there was wanting Divine fear and faith” \* \* because the scholastic teachers represent the natural depravity as less than it really is. \* \* “When they speak of the original (first) sin, they conceal the important wants of the human nature, or the absence of reverence and confidence toward God, and the presence of hatred to the government of God, terror at the justice of God, anger against God, despair of God’s favor, reliance upon things visible, &c.” These are the principal wants of human nature. \* \* “Men according to the original righteousness (the state of innocence) have not only an equable temperament of the body; but also these gifts, viz.: a certain knowledge of God, reverence toward him, confidence in him, at least uprightness, and the power to do it.” \* \* “Hence, the old explanation, when it says, that original sin is the destitution of righteousness, denies to man not only the obedience of the lower powers, but also knowledge of God, fear, &c., or, at least, the power to produce these.”

\* \* "Paul speaks expressly of original sin, as a want." \* \*  
 "Easily will the reader now perceive that to be without the true fear of God and without true faith in him, is not merely to be guilty of actual sins; for these are *abiding wants* in human nature, as long as it is not renewed (regenerated)."

3. But equally important is the doctrine of the Confessors, concerning the *character* of original sin. They declare that this inherent disease and natural depravity is *really* sin, not only called sin, but is sin, in the strictest sense. They seem simply to have asked: "What does the Divine law require, and what is natural depravity;" and the answer, from conscience and the Bible, being "It is a want of conformity to that which man ought to be," they conclude that it is *really* sin; that it properly bears the name, and truly possesses the character of sin. To the objection that this would represent man himself as sin, because it shows him to be, in his nature and by birth, against the law of God; they would answer, that is not properly man, as to the substance of his nature, but as to a quality inhering in his nature—a quality acquired since creation, though present at generation and birth; not man according to his normal constitution, but in his fallen state; not by his original nature, but by an accident invariably adhering to him, is he contrary to God's law. With them, it was a practical thing—a dreadful, but unquestionable fact. And, hence, in the Apology, they confidently appeal to the inner consciousness of every man, and to the revealed Word of God; assured that the response will be that there is a permanent inner source of sin, in all men, from the first moment of their being; and that this sinful inclination is really contrary to God's law, is *really* sin.

In order to appreciate fully this declaration of the Confessors, we must look at the state of things, in view of which it was made. All, with the exception of the Pelagians, agreed that natural depravity is an evil; but it was a question whether it is properly called *sin*—sin, in the strict sense—sin, in the sense of guilt. The idea of the Greek anthropology—that original sin, being merely a propagated physical corruption, and, consequently, not in the strict sense, sin—culminated in Pelagianism. This extreme went down under the weight of Augustinianism; but the old idea, in the form of Semi-Pelagianism, and, at last, under the name of Augustinianism, but with a preponderating tendency to the side of Pelagianism, became the predominant anthropology of the Papal Church.

This system taught that original righteousness did not belong to man's normal condition—was not a gift of creation, but a gift of grace; not a natural endowment, but a *donum superadditum*. It agreed with Pelagianism, that man, by creation, was neither holy nor sinful; but it said that he was made holy by a gift, superadded to the gifts of creation. He was originally neither positively righteous, nor positively unrighteous—was in *puris naturalibus*; his soul, in its immortal aspirations, going out after spiritual good; his body, with its carnal appetites craving sensual gratification—to check the conflict, to maintain the proper balance, to give to the higher powers their appropriate dominion in his nature—he was endowed with a superadded gift, not of creation, but by grace. In his fall, therefore, he lost no natural gift; he simply returned to his original state. Some, it is true, distinguished only in idea between the state in *puris naturalibus*, and that of the *donum superadditum*, and regarded the act of creation in the one, and the act of grace in the other, as co-etaneous in the perfection of man in original righteousness; and consequently, sin as reigning among men since the fall, not only as a consequence of the *concupiscentia*, but as inherited. But the great majority, with their high estimate of the powers of man, would not, even in this sense, admit an original sin; but ascribed to the fall of Adam only the consequence that his posterity are punished for his sake. The *justitia originalis*, and the *pura naturalia* were to be distinguished not only ideally, but actually, and the former regarded as coming to the latter only at a later period, as *donum superadditum*. The *justitia originalis* is lost indeed by the sin of Adam, but in such a way and manner that the human nature suffers no change or harm; the *concupiscentia* has indeed been deprived of the rein by which it was before restrained and guided; but it is not itself sin, and is only stimulated, and that not positively, but only privatively, to crave the sensual and the agreeable. The sin of Adam consists in the loss of the holiness and righteousness received as a super-added gift, in a weakened and oppressed will, and in the tendency of the *Concupiscentia*, itself innocent, to lead to sin, and consequently punishment and death. The sin of Adam bears the same relation to posterity that the crime of a rebel in political society does to his innocent children—where not only the guilty father, but the innocent children, are for the father's sake sometimes the subjects of punishment. If a prince should put his livery upon a naked

peasant, with the promise that he and his posterity should always wear it, if he behaved well; the loss of the livery, on transgression, would simply leave the peasant, and his children after him, in the same condition in which he was before he had this gift, and in which they would have been if he had never received it. So the subject Adam, in sinning against the Great King, lost the livery of heaven, in which he was clothed by the *donum superadditum*, and is left, with the children which he has propagated, *in puris naturalibus*. The depravity of the human heart is not original sin, in whole or in part, but is only a punishment of it; it is neither *good nor bad, and not, properly speaking, sin*—is only called sin in the sense that, if not resisted, the consequence is sin. Man was originally created with this inclination, and that it did not operate in Adam before the fall, resulted not from the fact that it was not in him, but because it was held in check by that supernatural grace—the *donum superadditum*.

This was the prevalent Papal Anthropology at the period of the Reformation, and it was especially upheld by Bishops Ambrosius Catharinus and Albertus Pighius. These men, in books published against Luther, maintained that there is *nothing in man since the fall*, which does not belong to the *essential* human nature—the *pura naturalia*; that the consequence of Adam's sin is *solely the imputation* of the fall. Fresh and lively in his sense of sin, and of pardoning grace, it was the lot of Luther to meet this great error. No wonder that it led him to make special efforts to revive the true doctrine of original sin, and to insist upon the depth and guilt of natural depravity. No wonder that he would bring out anew the doctrine of Augustine, that the natural and normal state of man's being, as he came from the creative hand, necessarily included original righteousness—that man was made by the Creator what he ought to be; that he could not have been what he ought to be without original righteousness, and that this gift of righteousness could not be superadded to the gifts of creation, for that would imply a period, even before the fall, during which he was not what he ought to be. No wonder that he should reject even the doctrine of the Greek Anthropology—that original sin being merely a propagated physical corruption, and consequently involuntary, is *not sin* in the sense of guilt—and agree with the Latin Anthropology that original sin is not only in the lower and sensuous, but also in the



higher and spiritual powers; that it is voluntary in the sense of *self-will*, and consequently is *really sin*; that even infants are guilty, because they possess not merely a corrupt, sensuous nature, but a sinful bias of will.

In this work the Confessors join, and declare that this depravity is *really sin*. "The scholastic teachers declare," says the Apology, "that nothing is sinful which is not done of free will. These principles hold with philosophers concerning human government, but they do not hold under the Divine Government." The state, they would say, deals with man as he is, because she has received him as he is; having received him with this inability, she has no right to require what he is not now able to perform; but the Divine Government deals with him as he ought to be; having received him holy, his present inability being his own production, having freely lost the ability with which he was primarily gifted, and which he had when he became the subject of the Divine Government; he is under obligation to possess the original righteousness, and consequently all his sins, both original and actual, are guilt. Their opponents, they say, "do not regard the evil inclination as *really sin*, not as a fault or corruption of the nature of man, but only as a servitude or a condition of mortality, to which all the posterity of Adam are subject, on account of the fault of another. \* \* It is, as when slaves are born of a slave-woman, and come into a servile condition without any *fault of their nature*, but through the *misfortune* of their mother. \* \* They speak of it as an evil *stimulant* (*fomes*), as a *particular quality of the body*, and in order, as usual, to be childish, they have raised the question, Whether this particular quality of the body is derived from eating the apple (*Contagia Pomi*), or from the breath of the serpent; whether it is made worse by medicine, etc." \* \* They maintain that this inclination is punishment; Luther says, "It is *certainly sin*." After quoting passages of Scripture, the Confessors draw the conclusion from what they regard as infallible testimony: "That evil inclination is *sin*, which though not imputed to those who are in Christ, yet in its nature *deserves* death."

And this, according to the Confessors, is the lamentable condition of the whole family of Adam. All men naturally engendered are in this state of sin and guilt—not even excepting the blessed Virgin. Nor would they have agreed with the Calvinistic doctrine, that the children of the elect were members of the kingdom of God by birth;

but declare that *all* men naturally engendered, whether born of regenerate or unregenerate parents, whether infants or adults, are born in sin, and that this inherent disease and natural depravity is *sin*, and still *condemns* and *causes eternal death to all* those who are not born again by Baptism and the Holy Ghost. They do not mean that unbaptized infants are lost; they speak only of God's revealed order; and while they do say that he binds us to this order, they do not imply that he binds himself by it. They had not forgotten that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb—that the dying thief entered unbaptized into Paradise—that when Jesus had said, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he added not, He that believeth not and is not baptized shall be damned; but simply, He that believeth not shall be damned—that he said, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God—that it is not the will of the Father, that one of these little ones should perish. Not the unavoidable deprivation of Baptism, but the wilful neglect of it, condemns. Nor is the doctrine of some so-called Old Lutherans of our day, that the faith which precedes Baptism is not yet saving, in accordance with the views of these first Lutherans in the early days of the Reformation. I need not say, therefore, that the Confessors do not mean that God has no other way or means of regeneration except those revealed in the Bible, or that unbaptized infants, from the mere absence or want of Baptism, are unregenerated, and dying in infancy are unprepared for heaven. They speak only of the revealed order of salvation, the way into which the Gospel calls us, and in which those who hear the Gospel have the only sure warrant and certain pledge of regeneration. To subjects who have not the Gospel, or are incapable of receiving it, this declaration does not refer. For aught it teaches, all infants, baptized or unbaptized, may be regenerated and saved. But if regenerated and saved, they are regenerated and saved by the grace of God alone. Sad picture of the state of man—human nature like a great giant mortally diseased in every part, limb and organ; no one member able effectually to help another—the leprous hand cannot minister to the diseased heart; the disordered heart cannot send a healthful life-current through the veins of the perishing members of the great body.

But whence this universality of human depravity? The Confessors say, Men are *born* with it. The Pelagians said, It is by the in-



fluence of example, and the power of habit; the Confessors, Men are born in sin. The Pelagians said, The only connection between the sin of Adam and the sins of his posterity, is the connection between example and imitation; the Confessors, It is an organic connection. The Pelagians said, The only power by which sin controls the powers of man is the force of habit; the Confessors, It is the result of being born a member of a fallen race. The Romanists said, All men come into this condition, because, according to the order of God, it is a punishment—*per modum reatus per debiti*; the Confessors, all men are born in sin, and this natural depravity is *really* sin.

What is their explanation of this awful fact? Have they a philosophy of this inborn sin, as guilt? Was the conception of natural depravity as, in the proper sense sin, sustained in their mind by any particular theory concerning the origin of the human soul? With the exception of the Pelagians, all were agreed that natural depravity is transmitted by propagation from Adam; but the question was whether it is merely inherited *evil*, or whether it is inherited *sin*, in the proper sense of the word. It has been supposed by some that, as the Confessors declared, it is not merely *physical* corruption, but *moral* pollution, involving not only the *lower*, but the *higher* powers of man; that it is the mere result of being *naturally engendered*, and that it is *really* sin; they must have relied much upon the Traducian theory of the origin of the soul. This is inferred partly from the fact that this theory is very favorable to their doctrine of original sin, and partly from the fact that it was afterward explicitly adopted by the Formula of Concord, and soon became the prevalent theory in the Lutheran Church. But though this theory may possibly be logically involved in their views of natural depravity, I doubt whether they were much influenced by it, or by anything except their deep sense of sin and their humble submission to the decisions of the Word of God regarding the character and condition of fallen man. They appeal to experience, and, in the Apology, challenge their opponents to show them in all history a single man who ever dared to say that what they described natural depravity to be, viz.: "Want of fear of God, etc.," was not sin, but they do not appeal for support to any theory of the origin of the soul. Luther was a Trichotomist, as well as a Traductionist, but as the former could not prevent him from rejecting the conclusion drawn from the Trichotomy, viz., that only the corporeal and animal, and

not the spiritual, was affected by the fall, so we may conclude that he was not influenced by the latter in favor of the Augustinian view of original sin. Besides, we are told on good authority that he was unwilling to decide the question between the Traductionists and Creationists of the day. From this we may infer that, though the Confessors were Traductionists, they were not influenced by the theory as were many Lutherans at a later day. So far as logical consequences are concerned, there is indeed a great difference in the bearings of the several hypotheses concerning the origin of the soul. The theory of pre-existence, regarding corporeal nature as a prison-house of souls, and each individual body as a prison-cell, into which an individual soul has descended for discipline, is obliged to say rather that sin is brought by the soul from another state of being, than that it comes by propagation of the body from the first man. Creationism, recognizing species only for the body and pure individuality for the soul—organic connection with Adam for the origin of the body, but pure creation for that of the soul—would certainly, in the absence of any other considerations, deny that natural depravity is *really* sin. From the early Greek fathers down to our day, those who rejected this doctrine have generally been believers in the theory of Pre-existence or that of Creation. Augustine himself, influenced by reason, or the general prevalence of Creationism, might hesitate to reject it; and Calvinistic, more readily than Lutheran believers in the guilt of original sin, can adopt it—for the former have, and the latter have not relief from a supposed divine fore-ordination of sin and guilt in man. Creationists may, consistently with their theory, be among the foremost in the belief of the universality and the depth of human depravity, nay, be led by the theory to peculiarly strong views of the guilt of all sin; but to the belief of inherited sin, in the sense of *guilt*, they must be led by other reasons and influences. But Traducianism, regarding all souls as present in the human nature, held in the person of Adam when he fell, is, by logical necessity, led to the conclusion that natural depravity is guilt. If all souls were potentially present, then when he sinned they sinned; and as the sin was voluntary, it is guilt. Creationism *admits* a *mediate* connection; Traduction *affirms* an *immediate* connection, between the sinning Adam and the sinning human family. Creationism does not *deny* the *possibility*, or even *probability*, that the created soul, connected with the propagated

body, may sin before birth; Traduction *affirms* the *absolute certainty* of the soul's having sinned before birth. Creationism *may be led* by experience and the Word of God to the conclusion that natural depravity, as real sin, existed in us before our birth; Traduction, *independently* of all other reasons, would infer this. Creationism *may admit* that the fall of Adam has produced in us that which is an *invariable occasion* of our being born with a depravity, which is really sin; Traduction *positively affirms* that it is a *necessary cause* of it, that it has introduced not only an occasion, but a *necessity*, of our coming into being sinful and guilty. Creationism *may admit* a natural ability, while it denies any moral ability in the human soul to avoid sin—that it had the power to avoid sin, while there was a moral certainty that it would not; Traduction *must deny* both *natural and moral* ability to every human being naturally engendered since the fall of Adam. But the Confessors rely upon no theory, and attempt no explanation; they consult conscience, and find that this depravity is *really* sin. They listen to the voice of experience, and learn that it has been their sin from their earliest recollection, that its origin was prior to consciousness, that in all probability they were born with it—born in sin—*born sinful and guilty*. They inquire at the oracles of God, and they think they hear the solemn response: "You were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did your mother conceive you;" and they state the awful fact of universal depravity and universal guilt—the awful fact: "That since the fall of Adam, all men naturally born are begotten and born in sin; that is, that they are, from the first moment of their existence, full of evil desire and propensity, and can, by nature, have no true fear of God, no true faith in God; and that this inherent disease and natural depravity *is really* sin."

4. And this leads us, in the last place, to consider the *consequences* of this natural depravity. Is there any escape from this deplorable condition? The Article answers: "It still condemns and causes eternal death to all those who are not born again of Baptism and the Holy Ghost." The Pelagians said: If man sin, he needs only the guiding light of truth, and the motive power of rewards and punishment for renovation; while his honest endeavors will secure the help of divine grace, to facilitate the work; still he is saved, not by the merits and sufferings, but by the teaching and example, of Christ. The Confessors say: "We condemn the Pelag-

ians and others, who deny that original corruption is sin, and who, to the disparagement of the merits and sufferings of Christ, allege that man, by his natural abilities, may be justified before God." These others were the Romanists. In the Apology stating the Papal doctrine, that: "Men can love God supremely, and keep his commandments;" they ask: "Is not this to have original righteousness? If the human nature have such great powers that it can, of itself, love God supremely, what has become of original sin? For what purpose do we need the grace of Christ, if we can be justified by our own righteousness? To what end do we need the Holy Ghost, if the human powers can, of themselves, love God and keep his commandments?" Man is lost, unless God save him; he can have neither merit nor strength for salvation; deliverance from this state is entirely by divine grace and by divine agency—entirely through regeneration by Baptism and the Holy Ghost—it is entirely monergistic. The Greek Anthropology said: The human will, unaffected by the fall, can begin the work of regeneration, but on account of the hindrances of depravity, it needs divine grace to complete it; there are two efficient agencies; the work is a synergism. Pelagianism said: Man has suffered no change by the fall; he still has his destiny in his own hands; man is the only efficient agent necessary in the production of holiness; salvation is monergistic. The Latin Anthropology said: The will of man has, by the fall, been determined to evil and fixed in enmity to God; the work of regeneration must, therefore, begin by divine agency, and, as the alienation from God, and the hostility to God's government, can cease only with the completion of the change, there can be no human co-operation; God is the only agent; man but the passive subject; there is complete and exclusive monergism in human salvation. The Greek Anthropology revived in Semi-Pelagianism, and speaking by the mouth of Rome, responded: These are extremes of the same faith; both agencies, the human and the divine, are present, are inseparable and co-operative in the beginning, middle, and end of the work; grace is given to all, but it is effectual only by the subject's use of his own remaining freedom to good. And to this, the Latin Anthropology, revived at the Reformation, answers in the Augsburg Confession: "The human will possesses some liberty for the performance of *civil duties*, and the choice of those things lying within the control of reason. But it does not



possess the power, without the influence of the Holy Spirit, of being just before God, or of yielding *spiritual obedience*; for the natural man receiveth not the things which are of the Spirit of God; but this is accomplished in the heart, when the *Holy Spirit is received through the Word*.

For regeneration, the Greek fathers look to divine grace and to the human will; Pelagius, to man alone; Augustine, to God alone. In connection with unconditional election, Augustinian Monergism bids us wait for irresistible grace; with conditional election, it bids us depend on grace, dispensed through divinely appointed means. Predestinarian Augustinianism looks for ability, as the effect of special grace; Lutheran Augustinianism, to regenerating grace, operating through the Word and Sacraments. But as Lutheranism teaches that grace is equally resistible, and natural depravity equally powerful, in all cases, and yet that some men do not, and others do, effectually resist, it must admit some kind of agency in the human will. As the difference is not in the grace, or in the depravity, it must be traced to some act of the will, productive or receptive, at some time during the process, and before its completion. Thus did it seem to stand upon a precipice, with the alternative of letting go its monergism, or being drawn, by an irresistible logic, into the gulf of unconditional election.

The Confessors seemed to be unconscious of this difficulty; not, I think, because they adopted the Augustinian Predestination; (for though, in their early writings, and in the fifth Article of the Confession, they show it some favor; yet, in another, by denying the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, they break a necessary link in the system;) but, because—controlled by the practical aspects of the truth—they remanded the work of bringing the great facts of revelation under the influence of the logical movement, into a system, to the schools; and, as matter of Confession and faith, present these facts as they are felt in experience, and received by the intuitions of the reason, rather than through the processes of the understanding. But the difficulty did make itself felt as soon as the *Calvinistic and Lutheran systems* of doctrine began to be developed. When, in the consequent conflict between the two, the Calvinists deduced what they regarded as the logical consequences of the Augustinian monergism, Melancthon, and with him a great part of the Lutheran Church, shuddering before the awful gulf of

unconditional election, and endeavoring to escape from its brink, accorded "to the human soul, though apostate, an appetency, faint and ineffectual, yet real and inalienable, toward the spiritual and the holy." "Three things concur in the work; the Word of God, the Holy Ghost, and the human will, as non-resisting to the Word of God." Human will and brute will, rational agency and instinctive activity, the good will, or the will as holy, and the will merely as a faculty—the one lost, the other incapable of being lost, without the annihilation of the man himself; the will as a power to think, or desire, or do, what is pleasing to God, and the will as a mode of activity, are to be distinguished. The good will was lost by the fall, and is only to be restored by divine influence; but the will, as a faculty, remains—as a capacity to accept the offered gifts of grace. This, at one blow, broke the chain of predestinarian consequences, drawn from the Augustinian doctrine of original sin. But it was pronounced synergistic, and was most decidedly condemned and repudiated by the Formula of Concord; the leading author of which said that the sinner had only the same kind of agency in his regeneration that the culprit has in his execution—he must be *there* as the subject of the action. His illustration of the power of man to come to the new life, is given in the supposed words of a thief, who, on the way to the gallows, should call to the people, running before him to the place of execution: "Not so fast, good people—don't run ahead of me—if *I am to be hanged, I shall have to be there.*" The Formula of Concord declares, that since the fall, there is not left in man a spark of spiritual power. The will, by nature, is free only to rebel against God, and is as incapable of all good as a hard stone, or block, or wild beast; yea, worse than a block, for that cannot resist. Man has only a passive capacity to be regenerated; and regeneration itself is a literal resurrection from spiritual death. Thus was developed the *Ecclesiastical system*—a step beyond the practical position of the Confession; its authors placing themselves systematically upon Monergistic ground; consciously rejecting the Augustinian predestinarianism; and yet, theoretically and tenaciously, clinging to the Augustinian doctrine of original sin. Even the theory of the Traducian origin of the soul is affirmed. No wonder that Spener denied the binding authority of this Symbol, and felt it necessary to say that even when it had been received, it was not made binding in all respects.



But how did it relieve itself from the consciousness of the claims of unconditional election and irresistible grace? It relied upon the efficacy of grace, regenerating non-resisting subjects in baptism. All who had been baptized in infancy (and nearly all with whom it dealt were) belonged to this class. All such—the work of regeneration, in which God alone operates, being completed—can co-operate. For all such there is the power of synergism. They are no longer merely passive, but can act, in the use of powers bestowed in regeneration. They are regenerate, though not renewed; children of God and heirs of salvation, though not converted. For the system distinguished between regeneration and conversion. In regeneration man is entirely passive; in conversion he is entirely active. In regeneration God bestows powers; in renovation man uses the powers thus bestowed. Man must be regenerated before he can be converted. Even the conversion of those who have fallen after baptism is a revival of the life communicated in baptism, for if it had ever been lost they could not have been converted. If renewed, and when renewed, after a life of deliberate sin, the conversion of men must be regarded not as the beginning *de novo* of the divine life in the soul, but only an awakening of the spiritual life bestowed in baptism, and which had never been suspended. “That awakening which occurs when life is restored after sickness, a swoon, or apparent death,” says Dr. J. H. Kurtz, one of the great leaders of the modern movement to revive the Ecclesiastical system, “cannot be mistaken for the bodily birth with which the operations of life commence; as little ought regeneration to be confounded with a spiritual awakening. When that communion with the Lord, which was established in baptism, is not maintained and continually renewed by means of appropriate spiritual care and sustenance, a spiritual state ensues which corresponds to bodily sleep, a swoon, or apparent bodily death. \* \* The recovery of an individual from such a death-like sleep through the illumination and calling of the Holy Ghost is termed his awakening.” Notwithstanding the absence of all the signs of life and the presence of all the marks of death, the lapse of many years of impenitence, and the commission of multitudes of wilful sins, the awakening must be considered as but the revival of a life infused in baptism. When the life infused in baptism terminates, according to Dr. J. H. Kurtz, “it terminates in actual or eternal death.” Once lost, it is never restored. But this same

Ecclesiastical system resisted the doctrine of the "Terminus," or that the day of grace may end before the termination of life, and taught that it extends to the moment of death, so that the person regenerated in baptism, though always impenitent, never forfeits the claims or loses the powers bestowed in regeneration while life lasts; is always in a state of justification, though impenitent, and may at any moment, up to the brink of eternity, repent and make good his title to eternal life.

The Symbolists (for this is a proper designation, as the supporters of this system laid exclusive claim to the merit of attachment to, and consistency with, the Symbols—I shall say, therefore, for brevity's sake, the Symbolists) made this theory the ground of their practice in dealing with their hearers. On this ground they called upon them to live to the glory of God, and to use the powers bestowed on them in regeneration at their baptism for their spiritual renewal, and included in this number of the regenerate the most gross and habitual sinners. Thus Newmeister, one of the twenty-seven out of thirty ministers of Hamburg who were champions of Symbolism, against Spener, in his sermons on "The New Man," addressed to the people for the express purpose of guarding them against that departure from orthodoxy with which he charges the Pietists, and with manifest desire to be very careful in his statements, says: "The new (regenerated) man is called spirit, both because the Spirit of God dwells in him, and also because he has obtained from him spiritual powers, so that he can believe and live in a manner well-pleasing to God and suitable to his eternal salvation. A regenerated believer co-operates in the work of renewal, co-operates in that holiness and righteousness which he is to let shine before men; there is consequently a great difference between renewal and regeneration, together with justification. As in justification, so in regeneration, man does nothing at all; this is wholly God's work alone. But as man receives powers in regeneration, when he applies these powers in his renewal he co-operates, though in much weakness and imperfection. This is clearly taught in the Symbolical Books, especially in Article III. of the Formula of Concord, according to the sacred Scriptures." And on the next page, in the application of the same sermon, he says: "Ardently do I beseech you, one and all (for one and all of you became new creatures in baptism), that ye now examine how ye have used the powers be-

stowed upon you." Continuing to address these same persons, whom he had just declared to be new creatures, he describes them as persons "walking in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revelings, banqueting and abominable idolatries." They, according to the symbolistic system, were not renewed, but still they were regenerated, and consequently they could act. Though a strenuous monergist, and zealous in warning against the idea that an unregenerated man can be anything else than passive, these drunken and lascivious and idolatrous men he could properly urge to action, because they were regenerated men; the work, in which God is the only efficient, was completed; and now, in their renewal, they could co-operate. Consistently, therefore, does he exhort them not to seek Christ for justification, or the Holy Ghost for regeneration; but that they, as justified and regenerated men, should "no longer live, the rest of their time, in the lusts of the flesh, but to the will of God." And this doctrine, he tells us, contrasts favorably with Calvinism, which makes baptism only an empty sign, and distinguishes it from regeneration, just as if the latter were not wrought through the former, and as if a man were not really made a new creature in baptism, unless he had, by an absolute decree of God, been predestined to salvation.

Thus were the Lutheran and Calvinistic systems rivals, for the honor of consistent monergism, and of having the best method of meeting the difficulties of the Augustinian doctrine of original sin, for the comfort of saints and the conversion of sinners. And thus did symbolistic Lutheranism apparently relieve itself from the paralysis of the doctrine of man's perfect passiveness in his regeneration. But it was a delusion, leading only to false activity and groundless hopes. The Pietists said it was a covert Pelagianism. It had certainly even more power to flatter and deceive itself with delusive hopes. For it had an outward and divine pledge, for all who trusted in it; while Pelagianism had only an inward and human ground of power to hope for a future and a death-bed conversion. Spenser deplored the effects of it, as little better than those of the papal *opus operatum*. And it was a departure from *original and true Lutheranism*. For Symbolism connects justification with regeneration, in which there are implanted only the powers for renewal: Luther makes it inseparable from a radical, inner change. Symbolism connects regeneration with the mere implantation of the

power to believe; Luther makes it inseparable from a living faith—a faith which, while it does not justify, because of the love with which it works, is notwithstanding a loving embrace of Christ. Symbolism said, faith, in regeneration, is present only potentially; Luther and the Confessors, that it is present in reality and in action; and this they held to be the case, even in the regeneration of children, in baptism. Symbolism places regeneration before mortification: Melanchthon, in the Apology, puts mortification, in the sense of contrition, before vivification, in the sense of consolation. Symbolism disconnects the idea of Justification from our sense of forgiveness; Melanchthon, in the Apology, connects it with the subjective application of forgiveness, or the refreshing and enlivening of the heart and conscience. According to Symbolism, the putting off of the old man is distinct from regeneration, is subsequent to it; but according to Luther, while the real victory over sin, and the principal expulsion of it, does not precede the beginning of faith in regeneration; yet that faith which accepts the terms of salvation, and brings Christ into the heart, is possible to those only, whose hearts have before been broken and made contrite by the terms of the law, yea, have tasted condemnation and death, in this experience. So Melanchthon, in the Apology, does not limit the term regeneration to that part of the great spiritual change which, in the Symbolistic system, is made to monopolize it; but extends it to the conversion and quickening, which occur afterwards, in the course of repentance.

The Ecclesiastical system was intended to afford a reason for that activity, in the work of personal religion, which all feel that conscience and the Bible require. As we cannot adopt this, let us ask what it was that, with their views of the relative guilt and utter impotency of man, enabled the Confessors to be so intensely active themselves, and to preach so confidently to others, “repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.” It was, first, the practical state of religion in which they were. The revival in which the Reformation was born led them, in its early years, to deal mainly with the practical aspects of truth, to depreciate scholasticism, and to keep in check that process of the understanding which can never be satisfied without a logical form for all truth, and which, too, attempts to bring within grasp of logical statement, truths too high for its reach, and too spiritual for the cold clutches of its logic.



Content with the facts, as they lie in consciousness and are revealed in the popular expressions of the Bible, they could receive and teach truths which, to the mere logical understanding, are irreconcilable, and keep the deepest feeling of impotency in perfect harmony with the most intense activity. Truths, liquid in the fervor of religious feeling, flow into each, while separated and put into the cold forms of logic, their inner connection, the bond of their real union, the point at which they are in harmony, is unseen. Every Christian's history, and every revival of religion, affords instances of the power of experience to reconcile apparently conflicting truths in religion; of the power of a practical interest in religion to cause a man to realize that God alone can change his heart; and yet to lead him to labor as if the whole work depended upon himself. The doctrine of this Article, therefore, will be appropriated by men very much according to the state of religion, and will always be accepted in a revived Christianity. The second reason was, the presence of a true Christian mysticism—that mysticism which, in all its speculative activity, relies more upon the insight of reason and the intuition of facts, than upon the logical understanding and the connections of abstract reasoning. Luther had the dialectics of Augustine imbued with the mysticism of the New Testament. Spener says: "That, as he found much more that was powerful and striving to the heart, in the Mystical than in the Scholastic theology, Luther was indebted, and acknowledged his indebtedness to Tauler, and the like mystical writers, more than to any other teachers; yea, those who are not entirely inexperienced in these things, and who will read especially Luther's earlier writings, in which *God laid the principal power of the Reformation* will see that he speaks so often in the style of the Mystics, has so absorbed them in his own person, and changed them into his own spiritual life and power, that he often quotes from them when he does not at all think of it." This tendency always checks that scientific spirit, falsely so-called, which must always have in Religion, as in Nature, a system—a form—a creed, and which, incapable of appreciating the Biblical method of at once exhibiting truth to all the capacities of man, is in danger of attempting to bring the boundless domain of the scheme of redemption within its own narrow limits, and of becoming impatient and tyrannical, in its requirement of unity and system in truths whose real

connections can only be realized through experience, and whose inner relations can be comprehended only by a theology which begins its superstructure only upon the facts in Christian consciousness, and attempts to build only as it can work in the light of revelation and experience.

So when the Ecclesiastical system had culminated in an orthodoxy which had dispensed with an earnest insisting upon an actual inner change; yea, regarded zeal for it with the suspicion of heresy, and denounced as unfaithful to Lutheranism those who could not believe that regeneration can exist without a real spiritual renewal; Arndt, influenced by the same Christian mysticism, which operated so powerfully in Luther, felt called to teach anew, what he called "the principal and inmost part of theology"—an experimental change of heart. Thus would he lead baptized Christians to an actual regeneration. For though he acknowledges, that even the most rebellious sinners, who had been baptized in infancy, were ingrafted into Christ; yet he takes care to say also, that, "as they have not grown in him, through a new life, it is manifest that they are broken off again, and are cut off like dry branches."

In like manner, Spener, seeing that the Ecclesiastical system preached Justification without exhibiting the power of a justifying faith, felt himself called to the work of insisting upon that spiritual illumination—that living faith, which utterly changes the character of man. In doing this, he said so much about an active faith—*fidem operosam*—as Arndt had called it, that he was charged by Symbolists, on every hand, with Synergism, yea, with Pelagianism. But he cared not for this, but insisted that love contributed to faith—was an element of saving faith—though not a justifying element, and, as love is a most intensely active element, he seemed to teach a Synergism; and yet he evidently held the Monergism of this Article of the Confession; and equally evident is it that the effect of his method was to save it from the destructive influence of that which laid exclusive claim to consistency with it. Hagenbach says that the Pietists kept alive "the conviction of sin and moral impotency," when the definitions of the schools had rendered it a dead letter. While Spener regarded the conversion of Christians who had fallen into spiritual death as a return to Baptismal grace, yet he calls such conversion explicitly and emphatically a new regeneration, inasmuch as the Baptismal regeneration had been en-



tirely lost; and regarding this as the condition of the vast majority of those baptized in infancy, he treated all who did not exhibit the evidences of spiritual life as not only unconverted, but unregenerate. He explicitly states and argues this point, showing the absurdity of the presence of life in the midst of nothing but the marks of death. It was the revival of the early Lutheran method. "In the case of Spener, as in the case of Luther," says Hagenbach: "it was experience which led him to the knowledge of sin, and moulded his views concerning its nature. Thus it happened, that in his system, sin and penance are closely connected with each other. He does not wait till his views of sin become cold and indifferent, but he strikes, as it were, the iron made red-hot in the furnace of inward experience, while it yet retains all its heat." As Luther returned to primitive Christianity, so did Spener return to early Lutheranism. I consider him as not only the second great Reformer of the Church, but also the father of the American Lutheran theology; and, hence, I have dwelt upon the true method of appropriating the Article, which found its full enunciation in his works.

The method of Spener, based upon the maxim: "That personal experience must precede all true knowledge of the truths of Revelation; that the doctrines of the Bible must be felt in order to be rightly apprehended by the understanding;" has, by the process of psychological discoveries been proved to be as correct philosophically, as it is practically important; that it is, indeed, the only true ground of theological science. So also, his method of Ecclesiastical union and discipline—based upon the idea that the whole of revealed truth can never be embraced in the logical formulas of men, and that, consequently, we must make no human creed the measure of our faith or profession; that we should go first to the Bible, then to the creed; try the creed by the truths first drawn from the Bible, and not the Biblical system by the Ecclesiastical dogma; subscribe the creed, not *per quia* but *per quatenus*—this method has, in the course of Ecclesiastical history, been approved by the voice of Providence, as the only true method of preserving the unity of the Church against the divergent forces, and the fundamental truths of Christianity, against the skeptical tendencies, of human nature. And paradoxical as it seemed then, and seems to many now, it has not chilled church feeling, nor checked scientific activity among Christians: but, while it has supplanted the old Eccles-

iastical system, and introduced a new method into the entire course of theological study, it has, at the same time, excited a more intense longing for the speculative apprehension of the scriptural idea of the Church, and a more persevering effort for true science in theology.

And the general result is, that in the course of the study, since that day, of the contents of this Article, the facts of sin and responsibility, of moral impotency and freedom of will, of organic necessity and personal liberty, generic condition and individual activity, are no longer in unconsciousness, as in the early age of the Church; nor in antagonism, as in the intervening period. The two sides of the nature and condition of the individual—as, in his rational nature and spiritual relations, free, and yet in bondage from his birth to sin and guilt, by his sensuous condition and his unavoidable relations to the race—the generic sinfulness, and the free activity; race determination, and individual influence, are gradually being recognized, more and more, as only the two sides of one and the same condition and activity. As idealism and sensationalism, long irreconcilable positions in psychology, were first both accepted as facts after men began to heed the voice of experience, and are now being, more and more, demonstrated by science to be both true, and in harmony with each other, and as but the two sides of the same subject; so after men had suspended the scientific operation of connection sufficiently to consult, according to Spener's method, the dictates of experience in Christian consciousness—had sufficiently freed themselves from the tyranny of the theological dogma, and the inflexible constraint of the creed, to be able to listen to the plain declarations of the Bible—then the facts, that we are sinful from our earliest being, and yet responsible; in bondage by our relations to the race, and yet in possession of personal liberty; enslaved by sin, and yet capable of activity, in view of motives presented by the gospel, and urged by conscience—began to be found both true, and neither exclusive of the other. The great facts of inborn depravity and personal responsibility, of native impotence and possible activity, in view of the offers, and under the influence of divine grace, are, more and more, felt to be in perfect harmony. And the theological mind of Christendom is beginning, with some success, to put into *systematic* connection, what has long ago been *felt* to be in harmony. It is not, indeed, a connection of the logical understanding, but rather an intuition of the reality of a harmonious connection, between the offer of

mercy on the one hand, and the capacity to receive on the other; between the command to repent and the power to obey, produced partly by the force of the command itself, in deepening, through the experience involved, the sense of the need of divine help; and partly by the superadded influence of the Holy Spirit—the philosophy of the adage of Augustine: *Ille facit, ut faciamus*.

Finally, it has learned that, though our liberty is limited—limited by God, limited by organic nature, limited by original sin, limited by acquired character; yet it is real—that holiness, in the sense in which the Bible presents and conscience requires it, is unattainable by the unaided powers of man; that, if men are saved at all, they must be saved by grace, through faith, and that a faith which they cannot produce, but can only receive; that in regeneration, they do not bring themselves to God, but only yield to God's drawing; and yet that this act, though not productive, but only receptive, is still an act, and though a yielding act, it is still a real act; and that though God is the only efficient agent, man is not entirely passive or inactive, in his repentance. Thus is the work still a monergism, and the fundamental truth of the Article remains, teaching us that God produces all in the change, and that we act it all; admonishing us to work out our own salvation with fear and with trembling, since it is God himself who, of his own good pleasure, worketh in us, both to will and to do, and commanding us, confidently, to use all the means of grace, but to be satisfied with no idea of a justification, and a regeneration, as saving us from the sin which "still condemns and causes eternal death," which is not connected with scriptural evidence of an actual inner change from sin to holiness, from spiritual death to spiritual life.

## ARTICLE III.

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# THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST.

BY S. S. SCHMUCKER, D. D.

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“ They likewise teach, that the Word, that is, the Son of God, assumed human nature, in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, human and divine, inseparably united in unity of person, one Christ, true God and true man, who was born of the Virgin Mary; who truly suffered, was crucified, died and was buried, that he might reconcile the Father to us, and be a sacrifice not only for original sin, but also for all actual sins of men. The same descended into hell and truly rose again the third day; then ascended to heaven, that he might sit at the right hand of the Father, might reign forever over all creatures, and might sanctify those who believe in him, by sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who may govern, console, quicken, and defend them against the devil and the power of sin. The same Christ will return again openly, that he may judge the living and the dead, etc., according to the Apostles' Creed.”

### INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

IN all discussions aiming at conviction, it is necessary to ascertain what points we may assume as conceded; for if our premises are disputed, the validity of our conclusions will, of course, be denied. On the present occasion, we may assume, that our hearers are professed Christians, who regard the Bible as a revelation from God, and consider all men under obligation to receive it as their only infallible rule of faith and practice. Hence, although in the history of Christianity its professors have, at different periods, and for various purposes, deemed it proper to make certain careful,

systematic statements of its principal doctrines, and termed them *Confessions* or *Creds*, it has been with the pre-supposition, that these doctrines are taught in the Scriptures; and if the contrary can be established concerning any Article, it has confessedly no binding authority. Thus in expounding the Augsburg Confession, it is to be done in the light of the Bible, its positions must be proved by the authority of the Bible, and if doubts arise in regard to any topics, they must be tested by the declarations of the Bible.

The most important Confessions of this kind, in the history of Christianity, are the so-called Apostles' Creed, the Niceno-Constantinopolitan and the Athanasian Creeds, together with the decisions of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, in regard to the person of Christ. The Creed of greatest moment in Protestantism, is the Augsburg Confession, of the sixteenth century. The first and second Articles of this venerable document, the mother Confession of Protestantism, have been the subjects of discussion in this series of Lectures, and the third invites our attention on the present occasion.

This Article discusses the Incarnation, the Christology and Soteriology of the Confession, or, the place which is assigned in it to the *Son of God, the Messiah or Christ*, and his *Work of Redemption*.

The *authorship* of this Article, like that of the Confession in general, belongs to the illustrious scholar of the Reformation, whose finished productions secured him the title of the Preceptor of Germany, and not the authorship of its Latin original alone, but also of the German,\* which was gradually elaborated and amended with the Latin at Augsburg, so that it also may be regarded as an original. For although the Torgau Articles of Luther, and other documents, were the basis out of which Melancthon, in concurrence with other theologians at Augsburg, constructed the Augsburg Confession, they were unrestricted as to the changes, as well in the German as in the Latin, some of the amendments having been suggested by the princes and jurists in attendance, especially by Chancellor Brück.

The Reformation had been in progress thirteen years before this Confession was delivered at the Diet of Augsburg, on the 25th of June, 1530, at three o'clock P. M. During this time the study of God's word had revealed to the Reformers and their adherents, the

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\* See abundant proof of this fact in Köllner's Symbolik, Vol. I., p. 172-179.



greater part of the corruptions, both doctrinal and practical, which had destroyed the purity and evangelical character of the Church of Rome. Purer views of the plan of salvation were disseminated, and a large portion of Germany had embraced those doctrines of grace, which fill the soul with joy and gladness through this life, and with the full assurance of eternal blessedness in the life to come.

The immediate occasion of this Confession was the announcement of the Emperor Charles V., that he would convene a Diet at Augsburg, in order, among other things, to settle the religious disputes which had distracted the land: adding that all parties should appear, and that all would be kindly heard and impartially judged. On this summons the Elector of Saxony (John) directed his theologians at Wittenberg, Luther, Melanchthon, Justus Jonas and Bugenhagen, to prepare a doctrinal statement, and to see well to it that its positions should be fully supported by proof, so that no one could improve it. They were also requested to bring it finished to Torgau, by the 20th of March, which was accordingly done. The Emperor, however, delayed his arrival more than two months, during which time Melanchthon, in concert with the other theologians, &c., assembled at Augsburg, changed and enlarged it into the present Augsburg Confession. To this the sanction of Luther was also obtained.

As the circumstances attending the preparation and delivery of the Augsburg Confession made its character throughout apologetic, so the name by which it was first designated, by both Melanchthon and Luther, was not the Confession, but the Augsburg *Apology*. Its object was to vindicate the Protestants, by showing that they did not differ from the Romish Church as much as their enemies alleged, not so much as to render them unworthy of toleration by the imperial government. In short, the design of the Apology was to produce the conviction in the Diet, that according to the Scriptures and the teachings of the ancient Church universal, Protestantism was legitimately entitled to ecclesiastical existence and protection. It was, therefore, by no means the design of Melanchthon, or of those represented by the Confession, to sever themselves from historical connection with the Church of former ages. He admitted that the essential doctrines were still inculcated in the Church from which they had separated; but maintained that both her dogma and cul-

tus were so radically corrupt, as absolutely to require purification. Instead of breaking loose from the Church of the past, the authors of the Confession maintain the unity of the system for which they contend with the doctrines and worship of the early and earliest ages. This fact is illustrated in an interesting manner in Melancthon's letter to the distinguished theologian Brentz, of Tübingen, in 1535; when the former had already changed his opinion on the doctrine of the real presence, but had not yet published his altered convictions. For the sake of secrecy, he wrote in *Greek*, lest his letter might fall into other hands, and he also requested his friend to destroy it after perusal.\* "I will not assume the character of a judge," says Melancthon; "I yield to you, who preside over the Church: and I affirm the doctrine of the real presence of the Lord in the Supper. I would not wish to be the originator of any innovation. But I do find in the writings of the ancients, many proofs that they regarded the Sacrament as a type or trope. Testimonies of an opposite character, are either of later writers, or are not genuine." In the edition of his *Loci* of the same year, he expressed these amended views without reservation.

Having thus disposed of all preliminary matters, we address ourselves to the subject matter of the Article of the Confession which we have selected, namely, the third.

The principal topics referred to in it, are:

- I. *The Incarnation of the Logos, or Son of God,*
- II. *The Christology,*
- III. *The Soteriology of the Article, and*
- IV. *The Eschatology of Christ.*

#### I. THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD, OR SON OF GOD.

As to the Logos, or Word, our Article informs us: "*The Churches teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, assumed human nature, in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary, &c.*"

The term "Word," or *λογος*, is employed in various significations, both in sacred and profane literature, besides its primitive literal sense, to express an articulate, oral sound. It is used in the gospel

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\*Ὅρῳ δὲ πολλὰς τῶν παλαιῶν συγγραφέων μαρτυρίας εἶναι, αἱ ἀντὶ ἀμφιβολίας ἐρμηνεύουσι το μυστήριον περὶ τυποῦ καὶ τροπικῶς ἐναντία δὲ μαρτυρίαι εἰσὶν ἡ νεώτεραι ἢ νοθεύουσι.—*Heppé's Confessionelle Entwicklung der Alt-Protestantischen Kirche*, p. 21, 22.

of John, whence the Confessors derived it, and in several other passages of the New Testament, in what may be termed its *inspired* signification, to designate the second person in the Trinity, who became incarnate, and existed on earth as *Godman*, or *Theanthropos*. Thus says John, "In the beginning was the Word," that is, The Logos or Word, existed from the beginning—"And the Word was with God, and the Word was God"—"And the Word (*λογος*) *was made* flesh (*σὰρξ ἐγένετο*), and dwelt among us." In the Revelation of St. John xix: 11, &c., says the holy seer: "And I saw the heavens opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written that no man knew but himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Logos, or *Word* of God."

Various are the learned speculations of the German literati, on the reasons which induced the Apostle John to select the term *λογος*, or Word, to designate the second person of the Trinity, whether or not it was the use of this term by his predecessor, the Jew, Philo, and also whether the latter attached the idea of personality to the term *λογος*. But the opinion of Neander, the learned historian, appears more satisfactory, that it is not of foreign, but of independent scriptural origin. "The title '*Word of God*,' (says Neander,) employed to designate the idea of the divine self-manifestation, the Apostle John could have arrived at within himself, independently of any outward tradition: and he would not have appropriated to his own purpose this title, which had previously been current in certain circles, had it not offered itself to him as the befitting form of expression for that which filled his own soul. But this word itself is certainly not derived, any more than the idea originally expressed in it, from the Platonic philosophy, which could furnish no occasion whatever for the choice of this particular expression. The Platonic philosophy led rather to the employment of the term *νοϋς*, (mind or thought), as a designation of the mediating principle in the Deity. It is rather the translation of the Old Testament term *Dabar*, Word; and it was this Old Testament conception, moreover, which led to the New Testament idea of the Logos. An intermediate step is formed, by what is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning a divine "Word" (see Bleek's Commentary); and thus we

find in the latest Epistles of Paul, from the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and onward, in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the Gospel of John, a well constituted series of links in the progressive development of the Apostolic Logos-doctrine.”\*

This same incarnate personage is, both in the Word of God and in our Article, also termed *the Son of God*. This designation likewise is characterized by a variety of significations. Yet all agree as to the person intended by it, whilst there is some diversity of views regarding his dignity. Nor can there be room for doubt that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the Virgin† Mary, was intended, in view of the declarations of John: “That God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son”—and that “the Word,” “which was God,” “became flesh, and dwelt amongst” the disciples, as the Son of Mary did.

Of the nature and properties of this mysterious person, various conceptions meet us on the pages of Patristic literature. They may be reduced to three.‡ In the earliest period of the Church, the scriptural representations of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were reposed in as satisfactory, and were enjoyed by Christians in their practical influences. The revealed facts were believed, whilst their philosophy was neither known nor studied. It is a matter of historic certainty that the Apostles and primitive Christians did worship Christ as divine. They were proverbially known as those who “invoke the name (ἐπιχαλουμένοι το ὄνομα) of the Lord Jesus,” that is, worship him. The proto-martyr Stephen also died “calling upon the Lord Jesus:” and of the same import in general, is the Hebrew phrase, “calling upon the name” of God.|| The Roman writer, Pliny, likewise affirms that Christians assembled, in his day, before day-break, to sing a hymn unto *Christ as God* (*quasi Deo*).

But the love of system inherent in the human mind led some of the early fathers to attempt a more minute delineation of the ab-

\* Neander I., p. 574.

† Justin Martyr, Irenæus and Tertullian, maintain the necessity of Jesus being born of a *virgin*, because Eve was led astray by Satan, whilst she was a virgin. But a more obvious reason, doubtless, is found in the fact that it was necessary in order that the human nature also of the Saviour should be without sin, which could not have been the case if born of sinful parents. See Gieseler's *Dogmengeschichte*, p. 186.

‡ Augusti *Dogmengeschichte*, p. 251-256.

|| Gen. iv. 26; 1 Kings xviii. 24; Ps. cxvi. 17; 2 Kings v. 11; Joel ii. 32.

stract person of the Logos in himself, as well in his state of incarnation, or union with humanity. The descriptions of some, such as Clemens Alexandrinus, seemed to regard the Logos, or Son of God, as a personified *attribute* of the Deity; thus, indeed, regarding him as divine, but forgetting that one attribute could not exist alone, and that the Scriptures represent him not as an attribute, but as a *person*.\* Others, such as *Tertullian* and *Origen*, regarded the Logos, not as an attribute, but as a *substance*, who, according to the latter father, was generated from eternity out of the Father, not as an emanation, but like the will of man, originating from his reason.†

During the earlier part of the *fourth century*, in the era of Athanasius, the doctrine of the homoousian, or equality of essence in the Logos or Son of God, as well as his eternal generation from the essence of the Father, was finally established. It was permanently settled by the Council of Chalcedon, as the acknowledged view of the Christian Church. The definite specifications of this theanthropic personage, as progressively affirmed by the successive Councils of Nice, A. D., 325, Constantinople, 381, Ephesus, 431, and Chalcedon, A. D. 451, present the subject in as clear a light as ever has been or ever will be attained in this world, where the perceptions of the soul are limited by our material organism, and all our intellectual operations also are conditioned and limited by time and space.

*The language of the Chalcedon Symbol is:* "We teach that Jesus

\* See, among other passages of Clemens, "Stromata V., p. 646—apud Augusti," p. 253.

† See *Περὶ ἀρχῶν*, I., C. 2-4. IV. 28. Contra Celsum, II. 469. *Martini*, in his History of the Divinity of Christ (pt. I., p. 187), presents the following as the developed system of *Origen*:

"The Logos, or Son of God, is a substance, existing from eternity aside from the Father, and in accordance with his will. He is exalted above all other creatures and endowed with divine power and dignity, but at the same time subordinate to the Father, partly because his existence and powers are derived from the Father, and partly because he in all things acts in accordance with the will and prescriptions of the Father. Now, as Christians acknowledge only one supreme, independent first cause of all things, the Father: but regard the Son, notwithstanding all his perfections, as a subordinate being, deriving all his power from the Father, and whose actions and influences are only effects of those powers conferred upon him in an incomprehensible manner by the Father, to whose commands also he in all things conforms; therefore it may with justice be said that they (Christians) worship only *one* God." See Augusti, sup. cit., p. 255.



Christ is perfect as respects his divinity, and perfect as respects his humanity; that he is truly God and truly a man, consisting of a rational soul and a body; that he is consubstantial (*ὁμοούσιον*) with the Father as to his divinity, and consubstantial with us (*ὁμοούσιον*) as to his humanity, and like us in all respects, sin excepted. He was begotten of the Father, before the ages (*πρὸ αἰώνων*, from eternity) as to his deity; but in these last days he was born of Mary, the mother of God (*θεοτόχος*) as to his humanity. He is one Christ, existing in two natures, without mixture (*ἀσυνχύτως*), without change (*ἀτρέπτως*) without division (*ἀδεαίρετως*), without separation (*αχωριστώς*)—the diversity of the two natures not being at all destroyed by their union in the person, but the peculiar properties (*ιδιωτης*) of each nature being preserved, and concurring to one person (*προσωπον*), and one subsistence (*ὑπόστασιν*)."

What relation as to time this central fact of our holy religion, the entrance of the Son of God into the sphere of humanity, by his wonderful connection with our nature, bears to the universal history of all worlds, we know not; nor how many thousands of ages may have elapsed between the creation of the matter of our earth and the present organization described in the Mosaic narrative; they having been consumed in the formation of the different geological strata of our globe. Dating from this period, and calculating from events which have since transpired on our earth, the Saviour was born about four thousand years from the Mosaic creation, or four years before the time from which our present Christian era was, by mistake, dated. Or, attaching the chronology of our earth to the revolutions of the larger system of the heavenly bodies, to which it belongs, it occurred in the four thousand seven hundred and tenth year of the *Julian period*. The precise month of the year is not certainly known, almost every month of the year having had some advocates among the learned of different ages and nations. The Latin and some other Western Churches observe the 25th of December, which does not seem the probable time, as shepherds do not ordinarily keep their sheep in the fields during winter nights. The most probable season is the fall, as advocated by Lightfoot, Scaliger, Caussabon and others.

The process of this wonderful union is usually termed incarnation (*ἐνσάρχως*). The incarnation seems to have been necessary, in order that men might be assured of the scheme of divine mercy. The

assumption of angelic, or any other nature than that of man, or the performance of any atoning work in any part of the world of spirits, would have failed to reach or to exert any influence on us;—but, having assumed our nature, he could dwell visibly amongst us, could instruct us personally, and die for us on the cross. Thus we can enter into brotherhood with Christ, and he be formed in us the hope of glory. But it was necessary not only to enable him to suffer, since as God alone he is impassible, but also to enable him to fulfil the law; because as God, the infinite lawgiver, he could not have been subjected to the law himself. Nor could he have fulfilled the law, which was adapted to creatures, except by assuming our nature. Thus “God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” *The Word* (λογος) says John, *became flesh*, (ἐγένετο σὰρξ), and dwelt amongst us, i. 14. And Paul to Timothy says: “Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, *God was manifested in the flesh* (ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί),” 1 Tim. iii. 16. To the Philippians he testifies of Jesus Christ, that “being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and *was made in the likeness of men* (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος)” ii. 6, 7. And to the Galatians he says: “But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, *made of a woman* (γενόμενος ἐκ γυναιχός),” iv. 4. And the aged and beloved apostle John, testifies that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh* (ἐν σαρκὶ ἦλθεν) 1 John iv. iii. The possibility, or at least the suitability, of the hypostatic union of the Son of God with human nature, seems to be based on the fact of our original innocence and holiness, for it seems revolting to our sense of propriety, that the holy God should thus enter into permanent union with a corrupt and sinful nature. Accordingly a human nature, restored to its primitive purity, was miraculously provided, by the overshadowing of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost, and her immaculate conception. Yet great is the mystery of godliness when God was manifested in the flesh. Nor could the opposite be reasonably expected. If it be admitted that the origin of human life, in ordinary cases, is wrapped up in mystery by the Creator, how much more must this be the case when the second person of the Trinity humbles himself so far as to be born of a woman, to be ushered into this world in union with a human nature, with the babe of Bethlehem! The fact, namely,

unity of person and duality of nature, is all we know, or can know ; it is fully attested by the Word of God, and we shall do well, without wishing to be wise above what is written, to labor to secure the boundless benedictions tendered to our race by this wonderful exhibition of divine love and mercy.\*

## II. THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE ARTICLE, OR THE PERSON OF THE GODMAN.

We now approach the Christology of the Article, that portion of it which relates to *the Person* of the Godman, or Theanthropos, the incarnate Son of God.

The language of the Creed is, "*That the two natures, human and divine, inseparably united into one person, constitute one Christ, who is true God and man.*"

The fundamental importance of this doctrine, both in its divine and human factors, as defined by the several Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, is vindicated by the entire Christian Church, in its Greek, its Romish, and its Protestant departments. Nor is there any deficiency of evidence.

That Jesus Christ was man must have been certainly known to those around him, by the testimony of the senses.

That he was an extraordinary messenger from God, was evident from his numerous miracles, performed in support of his instructions and mission.

But the peculiar nature of this union, the fact that the divinity dwelt within him, that the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, was personally united to him, could be learned only from the declarations of the inspired Word.

\*The subject of the mysterious doctrine of the incarnation is thus defined in the systematic language of different early Creeds.

The so-called *Apostles' Creed*, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was *born of the Virgin Mary (natus ex Maria Virgine).*"—Muller's Symb. B., p. 29.

The *Nicene Creed* says the Son of God *descended from heaven for our salvation and became incarnate* by the Holy Spirit, of the Virgin, and was *made man (incarnatus est de Spiritu sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est).*—Symb. B., p. 29.

The *Athanasian Creed* affirms: It is necessary—faithfully to believe "*the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ*"—That as God he was born of the substance of the Father from eternity ; and as man was born in time of the substance of his mother (*homo ex substantia matris in seculo natus.*)—*Idem.*

And what is the testimony on this subject? Before entering on it, let us premise a few general considerations on the nature of language and modes of expression concerning substances, persons and predicates, that we may the better understand those in which the Scriptures teach this doctrine.

It is admitted that the universe around us is known to us only by the properties of the different objects reached by our senses, such as white, black, heavy, light, circular, square, sweet, sour, etc. These properties are never found existing singly, but always several of them in combinations or clusters, each of which is judged by all men to belong to some substance or essence, such as stone, tree, horse, dog, etc. Of such substances or essences, however, we know nothing beyond these manifestations called properties. Each of these combinations of properties forms a unit, by the divine constitution of things; and human language furnishes words not only for each of these properties, but also for the supposed substance or essence to which they appertain. If this unit be an inanimate object, it is called, in human language, *a thing*, such as a stone, a tree, a house, etc. If it is a living, irrational being, the usage of language terms it *an animal*, as dog, horse, elephant.

If this unit to whom certain properties belong, be an intelligent, rational being, it is termed *a person*, such as man, angel, God.

By person in general we, therefore, understand a living, rational, free and responsible being, to whom certain properties permanently belong, and who is an agent or source of action, and further, in the case of man, also possesses a body.

Throughout all history these persons have remained separate and distinct. Between these properties generally we can trace two lines of resemblance, according to which they have ordinarily been divided into two classes, namely, those of *matter* and *mind*. All animals, rational and irrational, have properties belonging to *both these classes*, unless, perhaps, it be some animals of the lowest grade, whose instincts may scarcely partake of any intellectual character.

Yet in speaking of the mental or material properties of any of these animals or persons, all men alike attribute them to one and the same animal or person. Thus in man, mental and material properties found co-existing, are always attributed to the *one person*, in all languages and nations; and common sense decides in regard to each property or act affirmed, whether it belongs to his body or



his mind. But in every such case they are all attributed to the one person. Thus the one person James eats, James drinks, James thinks, James reasons. And this seems to be the will of the Creator, fixed in the constitution of nature and of the mind, that *all the properties, bodily and mental, found habitually co-existing in the same being, do constitute a unit or one person*, and we are compelled by our mental structure to think and to speak of them as together forming one being or person. This is also the way in which the Scriptures always speak of things, of animals, of men, of angels, and of God.

Now when we investigate the inspired records of the Old and New Testament, according to the most approved principles of historical interpretation, we find them speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ as being the Logos or Word, who was God and became flesh, as the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, who came to redeem and save our fallen race. We find that in numerous passages they attribute divine properties and actions to him, and in others, yea, sometimes in the same passage, also ascribe *human* properties and actions to the same person, in such a manner as to make it manifest that these two natures, human and divine, have, in the mysterious purposes of God, been united into one person, as certainly as soul and body are in man. In short, to use a term first introduced by Origen, of the third century, we find him represented as the God-man, the *Theanthropos*, a *person possessing two natures, one human and the other divine*.

All the inspired teachings on this subject may be reduced to the following five general features: 1. That the Saviour was truly *divine*. 2. That he was also possessed of a *real human* nature. 3. That these two natures were permanently and inseparably *united*; and 4. That the properties of each nature remained *perfectly distinct* from those of the other. 5. That the properties and actions of both natures which are thus affirmed of the one person do really all belong to that person.

1. *The Saviour was possessed of a truly divine nature.* On this subject let us listen to the Messianic prophets of the Old Testament.

In addition to the manifest intimation of his *human* nature, by the Evangelical prophet Isaiah, in the words, "The Lord himself shall give you a sign, *Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*;"\* his divinity is most clearly taught.

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\* Isaiah vii. 14. See also Gen. iii. 15; xii. 3; xlix. 8.



*Isaiah*, seven hundred and forty-one years before the Saviour's birth, says, "He shall be called *God with us*, Immanuel\*—yea, the *mighty God*, (ix. 6). For unto us a child is born, and unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, *the Mighty God*, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

*Jeremiah* says, "He (the future king of David) shall be called *The Lord our Righteousness* (xxiii. 6).

The prophet *Micah*, seven hundred and ten years before Christ, testifies, that the "*goings forth*" (of the predicted ruler) "*have been from of old, from everlasting*" (v. 2). "But thou Bethlehem, Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Now it is well known, that in the universal profane literature of the world, we look in vain for such a train of prophecies concerning any deliverer of men, spreading over several thousand years, and positively fulfilled, as that contained in the Scriptures concerning Christ, both David's Son and David's Lord.

Come we to the New Testament, we hear the forerunner of the Saviour, *John* the Baptist, exclaim (John i. 27): "He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose"—and again, when he beheld Jesus coming unto him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

But the Saviour's own declarations concerning himself, authenticated as they are by the numerous miracles of his life, clearly evince his antemundane existence, his omnipotence, omnipresence, divine "glory with the Father," and "equality with the Father."

"*Before Abraham was, I am*," John viii. 58. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the *glory which I had with thee, before the world was*," John xvii. 5. "*All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth*," Matt. xxviii. 18. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, *there I am in the midst of them*," Matt. xviii. 20. "Lo! I am with you *alway*, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men *should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father*," John v. 22, 23. See also John

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\* *Isaiah* vii. 14.

v. 26; xiv. 9; x. 30; v. 18; Matt. xxvi. 63—"The high priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said."

Hear the testimony of the *Father* at the Saviour's baptism: "And, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him: And, lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 16, 17.

And near the close of the Saviour's pilgrimage, *on the Mount of Transfiguration*, the Father again repeated his attestation, in the words uttered from the overshadowing cloud, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him," Matt. xvii. 5.

Of similar import is the *testimony of the apostles*, who being his daily associates, had full opportunity of knowing him, and being inspired by the Holy Ghost, were fully instructed on all things pertaining to the kingdom.

Thus *John*, the specially beloved disciple of the Lord, in the proem of his gospel, penned probably in opposition to the Cerinthians, who denied the divinity of Christ,—expressly tells us, that the Logos or Word, who became flesh and dwelt amongst them, positively had existed with God in the beginning, nay that he actually was God," John i. 1, etc. And again, the same apostle explicitly testifies, that the Son of God is come—and this *is the true God* and eternal life," 1 John v. 20. The apostle *Paul* declares the Saviour "to be *God over all* blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 5. That in him "dwelt *all the fulness of the Godhead* bodily," Col. ii. ix. That "*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*," 2 Cor. v. 19.

And the apostle Thomas, whose faith had wavered before, when the Saviour appeared to him and he inspected the signs of his identity exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" See also Philippians ii. 6-11; Heb. i. 8, 9; John iii. 16; Titus ii. 13; James ii. 1; Rev. i. 8; xix. 10.

The Scriptures also represent him as performing *divine works*. "All things," says John (i. 3) "were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." That the work of creation transcends the power of the creature and involves the true divinity of the Being exercising it, it were superfluous to prove, as it is admitted by all. Yet in Col. i. 16, the apostle Paul asserts, "that by

him (Christ, Col. i. 3, 4) were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible," etc. Heb. i. 2, 3, "God—hath by his Son—made the world," etc.

Yet more, the inspired volume explicitly ascribes *divine attributes* and *divine worship* to this wonderful personage, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It will be admitted that no infinite attributes can possibly appertain to his human nature. Hence there must be united with the man Jesus, a higher, a divine nature, of which such attributes are predicable, and united in so close a manner as to render proper the application of these predicates to the one complex person, Jesus Christ. Of an irrational animal, an elephant or horse, we cannot say, as we can in reference to any human being, he is mortal and he is immortal. Nor are we at a loss for the reason. Although we in both cases see nothing more than the mortal body, yet in regard to human beings, we have conclusive evidence that an invisible immortal spirit is united to the visible body. So, also, if the inspired writers had not believed that the divine being, the Logos or Son of God, was in an analagous, but equally mysterious manner, united to the man Jesus, it would have been utterly unmeaning in them to attribute divine attributes to him. Yet they ascribe to him *omnipotence*,\* *omniscience*† and the fullness of the *Godhead*,‡ that is, the entire mass of the divine perfections, or *glory* with the Father ere the world was.§

As to divine worship or adoration, it is that supreme regard and reverence, which can properly be offered only to the Supreme Being. It is entirely peculiar in its nature, It is the reverence due to infinite perfection, and cannot properly be offered to any finite being, not even to angels or archangels, to cherubim or seraphim. It differs from all other feelings of respect or affection, both in kind and degree, being based on the claims which infinite perfections, as well as creative and supporting power, alone have on all intelligent beings.

Hence as no creature, not even the archangels around the throne

\* Philip. iii. 21; John x. 18; 2 Pet. i. 3; Acts iii. 22.

† Acts i. 24; 1 Cor. iv. 5; Rev. ii. 23.

‡ Col. ii. 8, 9.

§ John v. 23; 1 Cor. i. 1, 2; Acts vii. 55, 59; Heb. i. 6; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rom. x. 9-14; Rev. v. 9-14.

of God, possesses infinite perfections, or created and supported any being, no *creature* can have a claim to worship or adoration. When St. John fell down before the angel in the Apocalypse, to worship him, the angelic messenger repelled the tender, saying, *See thou do it not. Worship God*, Rev. xxii. 9; xix. 10; Matt. iv. 10. This idea of the peculiarity of worship, as exclusively applicable to the Supreme Being, pervades the Scriptures.

Sincere worship also implies a conscious obligation, in its subject, of *supreme obedience* to God. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God," said Jesus to Satan, "and *him only shalt thou serve*," Matt. iv. 10.

Hence, when the Scriptures inculcate on all men the duty of *worshipping* the Saviour, they afford the strongest possible evidence of his divinity. And how strong and emphatic the language in which they hold up this obligation! "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father who hath sent him," John v. 23. "Let all the angels of God worship him," (namely, the first begotten, whom he hath brought into the world,) Heb. i. 6.

That "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," &c., Philip. ii: 10, 11.

"And they sang a new song," &c., Rev. v: 9-14.

It is, therefore, evident, that if it is possible for language to convey definite ideas on this subject, the Scriptures do teach the divinity of Christ. Yes, it is certain, the infinite Jehovah *did* condescend to veil himself in human flesh, the Infinite *does* dwell with the finite, the Creator with the creature. Thus, also, the infinitely Holy reveals himself to the vilest sinners, and tenders pardon and renewed favor to all who will accept the proffered boon.

And it is also true, that those ancient Arians and modern Socinians, who would strike the crown from the head of the Redeemer, and strip the Saviour of his divinity, are condemned by the plain and natural import of the inspired record. Not unjustly, therefore, were the founders of the former sect adjudged to be heretics by the Council of Nice, in the fourth century; as are also all the latter by the common judgment of the orthodox Churches since the days of Socinus in the sixteenth century, by whatever name they may be known; whether it be that of Socinians, Unitarians, Universalists, or Rationalists. All these persons err, by approaching the Scriptures with the pre-determined belief, that such a union of the divine and



human natures, in one person, is contrary to reason; and, therefore, they refuse to interpret the Scriptures on the subject of the Saviour's person according to the acknowledged principles of hermeneutics which are applied to other subjects, resorting to all manner of expedients to evade their natural and proper meaning.

Furthermore, these errorists forget the distinction between things that are *above* reason, and such as are *contrary* to it. They forget, that whilst no intelligent minds can believe things which they see to be contrary to reason, all men, learned and unlearned, daily and hourly *do believe* facts, which are utterly *above* reason, and inexplicable in their intrinsic nature or relations. Of these the single example of the union of the soul and body in one person in man, may suffice: which all men admit and believe, and yet no man can explain or comprehend, any more than the union of the divine and human natures in the one person, Jesus, the Messiah or Christ.

2. Again, the sacred writers teach, that the *Son of God*, the *Logos*, or *Word*, assumed a true *human* nature, and not only an *apparent* one, as was maintained by the Monarchians or Patripassians, in the latter part of the second century. These errorists asserted, that one single person in the Godhead, the absolute Deity, united itself with a human body; but a body destitute of a rational soul, which was, therefore, not a proper and complete human being. But the sacred volume affirms the actual, proper humanity of the Godman, just as unequivocally as his Divinity. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he (Christ) also himself likewise took part of the *same*, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," Heb. ii: 14.

The genuineness of his humanity is evinced by the fact, that he was born as "a child," he grew in knowledge and in stature, he ate, he drank, he slept, thrice he wept in sympathy for the sorrows of humanity (Luke xix: 41), he suffered hunger, and thirst, and pains and death. He had "flesh and bones," as other men, (Luke xxiv: 39). Nor had he merely a body without the higher rational part of humanity. "My *soul*," said he, "is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death."\* And this soul possessed not only knowledge, but also a *will*. "Not my *will*," said he, "but thine be done."†

It is true, all that mortal eyes saw of his person was the created

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\* Matt. xxvi: 38

† Luke xxii: 42.



human being, Jesus, the son of Mary. The fact that the invisible divinity, the Son of God, dwelt within him, as well as the extent and peculiar nature of this union, could not be seen by mortal eyes, nor even inferred primarily from his miracles: for other men also wrought miracles. This important doctrine was learned from his own declarations on the subject, and those of his inspired apostles, supported by the stupendous miracles and every other species of evidence, which both he and they exhibited, to substantiate the divinity of their mission.

As we are told (Heb. iv. 15) that in Jesus "we have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;" the question arises, was the Saviour subject to those temptations which resulted from our depraved nature? To this we reply, that as he was not tainted by natural depravity, he could not have been so tempted. His susceptibility was probably like that of Adam in his state of innocence before the fall, liable to all kinds of temptation, as we now are, except in so far as they result from our own depravity. That these temptations may be very strong, even in a state of innocence, is evident from the fact that both Adam and Eve fell victims to their influence and lost their first estate.

3. *The Scriptures further teach that these two natures are permanently united into one person.*

The language of our Article is, "The two natures, human and divine, are inseparably united into one person, who is true God and man." The intrinsic nature of this union, termed, in theological nomenclature, the *hypostatic* or *personal union*, is incomprehensible to us. The illustrious apostle of the Gentiles himself styles it a great mystery. "Great," says he, "without controversy is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."\* Yet the facts which are revealed concerning it, we understand and hold fast; and the intrinsic nature of the union itself, is not more incomprehensible than that of soul and body in man, which all men do believe.

But let us hear the inspired writers on this subject.

"For," says Paul, "there is one God and one Mediator between

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\* 1 Tim. iii. 16.

God and man, the *man* Christ Jesus.”\* “In him (Christ Jesus, v. 8) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”† And in a single verse to the Romans,‡ he teaches both the divine and human natures: “Whose (the Israelites’) are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the *flesh*, Christ came, who is *over all God*, blessed forever. Amen.” In Philippians ii. 6–11, he speaks in detail of both natures, manifestly referring to one and the same person. In some passages, action and attributes belonging to his human nature are affirmed of Christ, whilst he is designated by a name implying divinity, as in Matt. i. 23; Luke i. 31, 32; Acts xx. 28; Rom. viii. 32; 1 Cor. ii. 8; Col. i. 13, 14.

And in other passages, divine actions and attributes are predicated of him under names implying his humanity. John iii. 13; Rom. ix. 5; Rev. v. 12.

It therefore follows, that whatever be the nature of this hypostatic union, it is of such a character as to admit the reciprocal ascription of attributes taken from either nature, to the one theanthropic person, and of the designation of that person by names taken either from the human or divine nature.

It is also worthy of note that the Logos or Son of God, who had existed from eternity as the second person of the holy Trinity, united himself to a human *nature*, and *not to a distinct human person*. The human nature of Christ had never existed as a separate person. Had Jesus Christ first existed some time as a distinct person, the Godman would necessarily have consisted of two persons, as well as of two natures. Hence, when his humanity is spoken of, the reference is to his human *nature*, and not to a human *personality*, and that nature should always be regarded as connected with the divine person. Jesus Christ is not, and never was, a mere man, but a human nature combined with a divine person and divine nature. The incarnation consisted in humanizing the divinity, and not in deifying humanity. Each nature of the Saviour enables him to perform actions appropriate to itself. All the actions or sufferings performed or experienced by the Godman or theanthropic person, literally and truly belong to that person, no matter which of the

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\* 1 Tim. ii. 5.

† Col. ii. 9.

‡ Rom. ix. 5. See also Phil. ii. 8–11; 1 John i. 1, 2; iv. 2, 3; Gal. iv. 4; Col. ii. 9, etc.

two natures makes him capable of performing them; just as much as do mental and bodily acts in man both belong to the one person or man, in whom these powers of mind and body are found.

After Jesus entered on his public ministry, if not also before, it is probable that the divine theanthropic person originated all the acts of his two natures, and, therefore, also those which were performed through the powers and organs of his human body and mind. Hence all these acts are really the acts of the theanthropic person, and derive their dignity and importance from it; and this is true as much with those performed through his human as his divine nature.

All the actions of the Godman, or Theanthropos, relating to his human nature, were directed immediately by his human will, but under the superintendence of the divine. Whenever actions surpassing the powers of humanity were performed by the Saviour they were produced by the Theanthropos, through his divine nature, in harmony with the purposes and actions of the human.

The correct view of this subject has frequently been illustrated by the analogy of human personality. Man consists of two natures or parts, a body and a soul, a material and mental nature, known to all the world as distinct by their different properties. Yet the two united constitute the person man, the self-conscious self, the *ego*. Every property belonging to him pertains to one or other of his two natures, either to his body or mind. Yet both belong to the one person. Neither nature alone constitutes the person, but the person results from both, and represents both. The body is not the man and the soul is not the man, but the man results from the union of the two. Thus, also, neither the Son of God alone, nor the man Jesus alone, constitutes the Christ or promised Messiah, but both united form the Saviour, and are represented by the Theanthropic person, the Godman. Such is manifestly the doctrine of the Scriptures as to the human and divine natures in the one Theanthropic person of the blessed Redeemer.

The purposes of the Saviour's divine nature in the progress of the work of redemption, as also the peculiarity of his relation to God, probably became known to his humanity gradually, as the development of his human nature enabled him to comprehend them. Even in his early years, being free from sin, in a state resembling that of Adam before the fall, he doubtless enjoyed the same *peculiar* near-

ness to God which Adam did in his primitive innocence, but was unacquainted with the personal (hypostatic) union of the Logos or Word with him. At twelve years of age he was already conscious of having a special mission, by further communications from the divine nature. Hence when his mother found him in the temple, and inquired the cause of his tarrying behind, saying, "Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," he replied, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Doubtless the consciousness of this vocation, and the fullness of communications from the Logos, increased progressively. At what precise time he became fully conscious of the constant and personal union of the Son of God with him we know not. It may have been earlier, but certainly was not later than the date of his baptism, when the voice from heaven proclaimed, "This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." After his public ministry commenced, we must suppose him to have possessed this consciousness habitually. Yet were the divine attributes not always in exercise in him, for he himself has said, "But of that day (of Judgment) and that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels that are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father," Mark xiii. 32; Matt xxiv. 36, 42.

From this discussion we clearly see the error of the *Nestorian* Christology of the fifth century (A. D., 430), which regarded the two natures of the Saviour, not as united into one person, but as existing in two separate self-conscious persons, the one human and the other divine. As, according to that view, there is only a moral union between the two persons, the actions of either can derive no character or influence from the qualities or dignity of the other.

4. *There is no commixture of the two natures, the human and the divine.*

In all other cases in the universe, we find that the essential properties belonging to any being, animal or person, remain the same, and each retains its distinctive nature in perpetuity. Thus in man, however various the operations he performs, or the combinations he contemplates, his mental powers never become material, nor does his body ever become a faculty of his mind. In like manner, there is no evidence in Scripture of any commixture of the properties of the two natures in the Saviour's person, having ever occurred as the result of this union. Although it existed during his *entire life* on

earth, his human nature always retained all the ordinary properties of humanity; whilst the numerous miracles which the Saviour wrought are ascribed not to his humanity, but to the one divine *person*, the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor do they inform us that his divine nature ate bread and fish, or walked and slept. In short, the human nature of Christ is just as purely human as though the divine had never been connected with it; and the divine as purely divine as that of God the Father, who never became incarnate.

The human mind, moreover, naturally judges the creature to be essentially different from the Creator, the finite from the infinite, and the very idea of the one being commuted into the other, either in part or whole, is judged by the mind of man to involve contradiction. Else would the veneration and respect due to good men and to angels not differ in kind from that which we pay to God, but only in degree. Then, also, would the ancient apotheosis of heroes, and the modern worship of saints and of the Virgin Mary, involve in them nothing intrinsically unreasonable.

The Council of Chalcedon, in A. D. 451, expressed this doctrine in terms which have been satisfactory to the Christian Church until this day.

“He is one Christ, existing in two natures without mixture (ἀσυνχέτως), without change (ἀτρέπτως), without division (ἀδιαιρετως), without separation (ἀχωρίστως)—the diversity of the two natures not being at all destroyed by their union in the person; but the peculiar properties (ιδιώτης) of each nature being preserved, and concurring to one person (προσωπον), and one subsistence (ὑπόστασις).” From this view it is evident that the so-called doctrine of *Communicatio idiomatum*, or Interchange of attributes, between the divine and human natures of the Godman, is incorrect and unscriptural.

5. *That the attributes and actions of both natures, which are thus affirmed of the one person, do really all belong to that person.*

That the Scriptures do thus habitually ascribe attributes, taken both from the human and divine nature of the Godman, Jesus Christ, we have shown already by the two classes of texts, one of which proves the divinity and the other the humanity of the Saviour. That these various properties do appertain to this one Theanthropic person, not by mere figure of speech, but in logical verity, by the divinely constituted relations of this supernatural personage, is also evident from the language itself.



We affirm, not that the properties and actions of either nature are attributed in Scripture to the opposite *nature*; but to the one Theanthropic *person*, to the Godman, whose name represents both natures, and whose being is made up of neither alone, but of both together. Just as when we say James walks, we do not regard the act as belonging merely to the body, with which the mind has no connection; but at once regard it as an act of the person, which may be connected with important motives in the mind, or may form a part of a plan of action seated wholly in the mind, concerning which the body knows nothing. In short, we refer the action to the person James.

The intrinsic nature of this personal or hypostatic union, God has nowhere explained to us in his word, so that we are neither able nor called on to explain it. It is just as inexplicable as the union of soul and body in man. The theory that the two natures have but *one consciousness*, is not affirmed in Scripture, and seems to militate against the completeness of the Saviour's humanity. Nor is the theory necessary. It is the fact taught in Scripture, of God's having combined the two natures into one person, thus for wise reasons forming a *new person*, consisting of the Divine Logos and a human nature, which makes the attributes of both natures predicable of this one person; and not the denial of a human consciousness. And it is the fact that the inspired volume does thus ascribe attributes derived from both natures to this one person, that makes it obligatory upon us to believe the doctrine. Every action, human and divine, ascribed to the Saviour in Scripture, either by himself or the inspired apostles, must therefore be regarded as belonging to his person, to himself: and as proceeding from, or performed by that nature, either human or divine, to whose well-known properties it is appropriate. Thus, in John xvi. 28, the Saviour affirms, "I came from the Father, and came into the world." Now there is no reason to believe, as the early Socinians did, that the human nature of Jesus ever existed before his birth of the Virgin Mary, when the Logos or Word became flesh, that is, assumed our nature, and that it had been taken to heaven and returned again. Therefore it must have been his divine nature that came from the Father, where it had existed in glory from eternity. And when the Scriptures declare that Jesus Christ came into the world "not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved,"—that "the

Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many,"—"that he bore our sins in his own body on the tree," &c.—it would be the height of absurdity to suppose, that this great atoning and redeeming work, of which prophets had spoken thousands of years before, and for which the Son of God assumed our passible nature, that he might *be able to suffer*, should be regarded as having nothing to do with him at last, and as being the act merely of that human nature, which was ignorant of the plan and purpose until after the incarnation. No, the sufferings were those of the *Theanthropic person*, whose most important nature was *divine*. Hence it may be justly said He (God) purchased his Church with his own blood. Had the suffering belonged to the human nature alone, then did God not send *his Son* into the world to suffer and to die for us: but merely to select a different being, the mere son of Mary, to do so! Then also did the Son of God not come into the world to give *his* life a ransom for all, but to induce a human being to make the sacrifice. But in all these passages these vicarious atoning sufferings and actions are evidently affirmed of the Saviour, of the *Theanthropic person*.

Throughout the animal creation every action or passion, performed or suffered by any organ or part of the animal, is naturally ascribed to the whole being, is regarded not as simply a matter of the animal's body, but of his entire being; and our interest and sympathy are proportioned to the degree of intelligence, sagacity and worthiness we suppose it to possess. Again, in man, it is his body that makes him capable of suffering injury from external physical violence; for the soul can neither be cut with the sword nor penetrated by a ball. Yet, when injury is thus done to the body, it is the mind which is the real seat of sensation, and which is the part that suffers. But whether the sufferings of man proceed from corporeal or mental causes, whether they are inflicted on the body or the mind, they are, by the laws of our mental constitution, attributed to the *person*, to that name which represents both parts of the one being.

Thus, also, must we naturally suppose, that in this supernatural, complex personage, the Godman, all the acts of both his constituent natures *do really belong* to the one person, and must in propriety be predicated of it, and not distinctively of either nature. Hence the sufferings of the blessed Saviour, in the Garden and on the Cross,

both bodily and mental, were really and truly the sufferings of the one being, the Godman, the Theanthropos, the Son of God and son of man, and not of the divine nature alone, as Osiander taught, or of the human alone, as Stancar supposed. And as the divine nature is the real personal basis of the Godman, and is infinitely more exalted and important than the humanity, it must sustain the more potential part in the complex being, and the sufferings of the Theanthropos appertain at least as much to the divine nature as to the human, and possess an influence and dignity commensurate rather with the divine than human, they must be rather infinite than finite!

The plan of the great work of Redemption and its gradual revelation, as well as the preparation of the Church and the world for it through four thousand years, was entirely the work of God; but in its actual execution, the human nature of the Saviour co-operated and served as the organism, through which the Logos (Word) communicated with men, and was enabled to suffer and die in our stead and for our redemption. It was the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, who voluntarily undertook the work of redeeming the fallen race of Adam. It was the Son of God, who, soon after the Fall, announced his intention, as "the seed of the woman," to bruise the Serpent's head. It was the Son of God who from age to age revealed one feature after another of the plan of Redemption through the prophets, until the entire scheme was fully presented, though imperfectly understood by the carnal Jews, who expected a *temporal* kingdom of heaven. It was the Son of God who directed the circumstances of his own incarnation, the miraculous conception of the Virgin Mary, and the birth of her Son. It was the Son of God who united himself with the miraculously conceived human being before his birth, and therefore, before he had yet lived on earth or attained a separate personality. It was the Son of God who determined beforehand the circumstances of the Saviour's birth. And it was the Son of God who in general determined the sphere in which the human nature of the Saviour, in the full exercise of his will, and in connection with the divine nature, together constituting the Theanthropic person, should co-operate in executing the work of redeeming love. As the human nature of the Saviour was to be complete and real, in all things, sin excepted, the Theanthropos withheld (ἐαυτὸν ἐχένωσε) the manifestations of the divine nature, through the infancy and youth of Jesus, and left him

to his natural and proper development, until the necessities of his public ministry called for the exercise of his higher powers. This circumstance gave rise to what the Form of Concord terms the *two-fold state* of Christ (*status exinanitionis et exaltationis*), designated by later divines, the Saviour's state of *humiliation* and of *exaltation*, Rom. viii. 3; Philip. ii. 6-11; Acts v. 30; ii. 33-36.

What a glorious view does this doctrine afford, of the all-sufficient basis of the great work of atonement and redemption, of the all-prevailing righteousness, the vicarious sufferings and death of the Redeemer! What power is there in the declaration of Scripture, that not a mere man, but God so loved the world, as to send his only-begotten Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world *through him* might be saved! And again, The blood of Christ (the Son of God, the Godman) *cleanseth us from all sin!*

In conclusion, it is gratifying to find this view of our subject, which we have found so clearly deducible from the teachings of God's word, taught with great confidence and perspicuity by that greatest of Reformers, Martin Luther himself:

"If it should be objected (says he) on the ground of reason, that the Godhead cannot suffer nor die, you must answer, That is true; nevertheless, as the divinity and humanity in Christ constitute one person, therefore the Scriptures, on account of this personal unity, also attribute everything to the Deity which occurred to the humanity, and *vice versa*. This is moreover accordant with truth; for you must affirm that the person (Christ) suffers and dies. Now the person is the true God, therefore it is proper to say, the Son of God suffers. For although one part (if I may so speak), namely, *the Godhead does not suffer*, still, the person, which is God, suffers in its other part, that is, *in its humanity* (denn obwohl das eine Stück [dasz ich so rede] als die Gottheit nicht leidet; so leidet dennoch die Person, welch Gott ist, am andern Stücke, als an der Menschheit). Thus we say, The king's son has a sore, and yet it is only his leg that is affected; Solomon is wise, and yet it is only his soul which possesses wisdom; Absalom is beautiful, and yet it was only his body that was referred to; Peter is gray, and yet it is only his head of which this is affirmed. For as soul and body constitute but one person, everything which happens either to the body or the soul, yea, even to the smallest member of the body, is justly and

properly attributed to the whole person. *This mode of expression is not peculiar to the Scriptures, but prevails throughout the world, and is also correct. Thus the Son of God was in truth crucified for us, that is, the person which is God ; for this person, I say, was crucified according to its humanity.*”—*Luth. Works*, Jena edit., vol. 3, p. 457.

#### SOTERIOLOGY.

We have thus arrived at the third grand doctrine of our Article, its Soteriology.

Let us hear the language of the Article on this subject :

*“ Who (namely, the Christ,) truly suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried, that he might reconcile the Father to us, and be a sacrifice not only for original sin, but also for all the actual sins of men.”*

The merits of Christ, which form the basis of Christian Soteriology, have been variously divided. The earliest classification is that which separates his activities into those of *prophet, priest, and king*, found as early as the time of Eusebius, in the fourth century.\* The other and more natural division is into the *active* and *passive righteousness* of the Redeemer, the former including all the actions of his life in fulfilment of the divine law instead of the sinner, and the latter all his sufferings as well as death in his behalf. We shall, however, adhere to the more ancient, simple, and historical arrangement of the Article before us.

Here we find three items indicated, namely, the sufferings and death of the Saviour as matters of history, their necessity, their vicarious nature, and lastly the manner in which they effect the contemplated end.

#### I. THE SUFFERINGS AND DEATH OF CHRIST AS MATTERS OF HISTORY.

I. The *historical verity* of the Saviour's sufferings and death is so manifestly and irresistibly evident from the simple yet detailed and impartial narratives of the synoptical gospels, that it has been generally admitted both by Jews and Christians. See Matt. xxvi. and xxvii.; Mark xiv. and xv., and Luke xxii. and xxiii. To specify these evidences would require the rehearsal of the entire chapters.

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\* Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. I., c. 3. ὡς τουτους ἀπαντας την ἐπὶ τον ἀληθη χριστον ἀναφοραν ἔχειν, μονον ἀρχιερεα των ὄλων, και μονον ἀπασης της χτισεως βασιλεα, και μονον προφήτην, ἀρχιπροφήτην τον πατρος τυγχανοντα.



The *Docetæ* alone, a species of incipient Gnostic, volatilized the Saviour's human nature into a mere phantasm, and denied that he had a real body, thus of course rejecting the reality of his sufferings upon the cross. Mohammed also ventured to deny it, under the ridiculous pretext that Christ was withdrawn and a Jew was crucified in his stead. Some modern *Rationalists* and infidels have impugned it, adopting the principle of exegesis that miracles being, in their judgment, impossible, no interpretation of any Scripture passage can be correct which implies or affirms one. They have accordingly denied the reality of Christ's death, in order to disprove the truth of a resurrection in his case. But their utter destitution of all historical evidence, in view of the detailed and generally accredited gospel narratives, has prevented the reception of their theory even among the practical neglecters of religion.

2. The *magnitude* of the Saviour's sufferings is evident from the narratives of the gospel, in which a series of indignities and cruelties are detailed such as are rarely inflicted on the greatest malefactors. Yet it has been the prevailing opinion of the Church in all ages that his greatest sufferings were mental and internal. They must have included sorrow on account of the sins of all mankind in all ages. By these sins indignity was offered to the infinitely good and glorious Father in heaven, the honor of this law was constantly violated by men on earth, and all men were encouraged to indulge their sinful propensities, involving the human race in continual rebellion against the best benefactor and God, as well as entailing on themselves eternal ruin. Of all this the Saviour had a more perfect knowledge than any mere human being ever could have. A deep sense of the displeasure of his *heavenly Father* for the assumed guilt of the world also evidently bore with incalculable weight upon his soul, for the immediate hand of God pressed this heavy load upon his heart so that he was constrained to exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

These sources of suffering alone would have far transcended the powers of endurance of any mere man, and constrain us to resort to the peculiarity of his person for explanation. This union of the two natures in one person involves the inference that the sufferings were not those of his human nature alone, but of his Theanthropic person, of the Godman. So that the divinity of his *person* not only gave him infinitely greater power to endure the inconceivable pains

inflicted by the Father on account of the dishonor entailed upon his law, but it also gave to the sufferings of that Godman *infinitely greater atoning and reconciling efficacy* than could have belonged to any merely human being. Thus it is an obvious principle of human judgment that the same wound, made in the body of a horse and a man, is possessed of very different degrees of importance and influence. The sensibility of the horse is less acute than that of the man. The brute, moreover, suffers simply the pain caused by the lesion of his body, whilst the rational reflecting man, in addition to that naked pain of the wound, experiences much greater suffering from his knowledge of the various consequences which these pains will produce to him and to others. And finally the *infinite dignity* of his Theanthropic person confers *infinite efficacy* on all his actions and sufferings to accomplish the end for which they were performed and endured.

II. The *necessity of these sufferings* of the Saviour, is already presupposed by the several facts, that when the love of God induced him to provide for the salvation of our sinful race, God himself proposed this, and no other method of salvation, "not sparing even his own Son," which he would have done if the sacrifice had been unnecessary—that the Son of God was willing to make the mournful, bloody sacrifice—and that the Father approved his assumption of the mission by a voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

But "that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin," is further evident from the essential attributes, the punitive justice and holiness of God. The divine favor is life, and his loving kindness better than life. But that Being, who delights in holiness, who has made all the powers of his rational creatures, and all the organizations of physical nature around them productive of pleasure, and has inscribed on the structure of the universe around us, the law that *virtue is productive of happiness and vice of misery*—that God cannot continue to bestow his favor on the impenitent, persistent transgressor of his law, but sooner or later must withdraw it, and that withdrawal involves eternal banishment from his presence into the regions of endless darkness and despair.

Moreover, God being the moral Governor of the universe, and having given to his rational creatures laws infinitely wise and calculated to secure their highest happiness, it is evidently his supreme

legislative duty to maintain the honor of his law, on which the security and happiness of all his faithful subjects depend, by punishing the transgression of them, either in the person of each criminal, or on a substitute, or by exhibiting in some other way his inviolable hatred to sin, thus to deter others from transgression. What judgment would we form of a human governor who, having enacted wise and salutary laws, should neglect to enforce obedience to them; but, on the contrary, should suffer the rights and security of person and property to be violated with impunity? Now the infinite Jehovah, having determined on this plan of salvation, by the sufferings and death of his own Son upon the cross, we must regard the plan as consonant with his nature, and as satisfactory to the demands of the violated law. We are therefore compelled to regard these sufferings of the Godman as absolutely necessary, unless God would abdicate the throne of the universe, or divest himself of those essential attributes in consequence of which "he is angry with the wicked every day," Ps. vii. 11, and "the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination in his sight," Ps. xv. 26, and "without holiness no man shall see God."

Evidently then, the theory of Grotius, that the necessity of an atonement was only hypothetical, being caused by the fact that God had *published a law* threatening punishment to sinners, and that had he not done so, he might have pardoned sin without any atonement or satisfaction if he had seen fit to do so, is a radical error, ignoring the essential holiness, justice and benevolence of God, and attributing mutability to "him in whom there is no variableness nor the shadow of a change."

### III. *Their Vicarious Nature and Necessity.*

In perusing the numberless declarations of the inspired volume touching the wonderful sufferings of the Godman in the work of Redemption, we are forcibly struck with the frequency and the variety of expression, in which their *vicarious* nature is held up to view. The holy seer, Isaiah, who had been describing the Messiah and his kingdom, says: "He was wounded *for our* transgressions, he was bruised *for our* iniquities; the chastisement *of our* peace was upon him, and *with his stripes we are healed.*" "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way: and the Lord hath laid *on him* the iniquities *of us* all," Isaiah liii. 5, 6. The apostle Peter says, "Who (namely Christ) his own self bare

our sins in *his own body* on the tree—by whose stripes ye were healed.” And the greatest of the apostles, in his epistle to the Galatians (iii. 13), testifies, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, *being made a curse for us.*” “The *blood* of Jesus Christ,” says John, “*cleanses us* from all sin.” In the Apocalypse, ascriptions of praise are given to Jesus Christ, as “to him that loved us and washed us from our sins in *his own blood,*” Rev. i. 5. And to the Romans, Paul says, “When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,” v. 10, and to the Corinthians (2 Cor. v. 18, 19) “God reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation; namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”

Thus we see that the method selected by infinite wisdom to redeem our fallen race, is through the actions, sufferings, and death of the *Godman*. Had pardon been promised on the ground of anything that any mere man had done, or had Jesus Christ been a mere man, his life and death would have not only lacked the necessary efficacy or redeeming power, from want of proper dignity of his person; but his efforts could only tend to excite in the sinner gratitude to *him*, and *not to God*. But as the work was effected by the Theanthropic miraculous *person*, the Godman, in whom the human and divine natures are combined, and the divine even preponderated, the acts, sufferings and death of this divine personage not only possess divine efficacy, but are also directly calculated to excite in the hearts of redeemed sinners love and gratitude unbounded to the divine Redeemer, *to God*.

All these inspired declarations accord with the view more generally prevailing in all ages of the Church and bring us to

IV. *The Manner in which the Sufferings and Death of the Godman, Jesus Christ, were designed to effect our Salvation.*

From the very dawn of Christianity, primitive believers and Christian fathers regarded the work of the Godman, and especially his death, as in some way the *procuring cause* of salvation to the fallen race of Adam. But the development of the expiatory work of Christ, as a distinct satisfaction made by the Godman to the demands of penal justice, and of the manner in which it affects the relations of the sinner to the law of God, was more tardy than that of Anthropology and Theology, as well as of some other less important doctrines.

The *Gnostics* (Basilides, A. D. 125) who taught a mere spectral humanity in connection with the Logos, and the Ebionites, who denied all connection between God and man in Christ, virtually rejected the atonement. The earliest fathers, in opposition to these heretics, taught, though not with equal perspicuity, that the sufferings of the Saviour were not the sufferings of a mere man, but of the Godman, and were expiatory of the guilt of our fallen race.

The visionary *Origen*, of the third century, understood the death of the Saviour in a mystic and idealistic sense, as an event not limited to this visible world, nor to one single period of time. He viewed it as occurring in heaven as well as on earth, as embracing all ages, and, in its consequences, of infinite importance for other worlds.\* *Origen*, therefore, could not view the atonement as vicarious, because he regarded all punishment as disciplinary and not judicial, as temporary and not eternal, and considered souls as constantly falling and being reclaimed. Yet sometimes he speaks of the atonement as expiatory.

In the *third* century, and in a few instances even earlier, some of the Christian fathers, by misinterpreting several passages of Scripture, as Col. ii. 15, Heb. xi. 14, and still retaining the Jewish and Oriental idea of the great influence of Satan and evil spirits, gave currency to the erroneous opinion that mankind since the 'fall were not only subject to temptation from Satan and other evil spirits, as the Scriptures teach; but literally under his *constant control*. Hence they misunderstood the passages teaching that Christ laid down his life a sacrifice for us, or for sin, as though the sacrifice or ransom had been made to Satan instead of to God; and that the result of redemption was not to reconcile us to God, so much as to deliver us from the supposed absolute servitude to Satan.

This theory, first adopted in the *Greek Church*, in the third century, especially by *Origen*, and later by *Gregory of Nyssa* and *Gregory Nazianzen*, was transplanted to the *Latin Church*, and adopted by *Ambrose*, and even in some degree also by *Augustine*. This erroneous view generally prevailed in the *Papal Church* until the twelfth century, and formed a very congenial auxiliary to the superstitions and formalism of *Rome*.

After some centuries of comparative darkness, and in the begin-

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\* 'Ον μονὸν ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων ἀπέθανεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν λοιπῶν λογικῶν.



ning of the scholastic period, the true doctrine of a *vicarious atonement*, which had been presented in a general and popular way by the early fathers, and whose systematic relations had been touched on by Athanasius and John Damascenus, was fully taught by *Anselm*, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1093 (born 1034, died about 1109). He represented it as a wonderful scheme of divine love and mercy, devised in the councils of eternity, to redeem our fallen race from the dominion and curse of sin. This theory assumes that man is under natural obligation of obedience to the laws of God, the violation of which created a debt, which is sin, and for which satisfaction must be made to the punitive justice of God. This punishment must be endured, either by the sinner himself, or by his substitute. The justice of God demanded a sacrifice, and the benevolence of God furnished *the* victim, by the surrender of his own Son, who voluntarily offered himself a ransom for our sinful race. This view of the case is argued with consummate dialectic skill by Anselm, in his work entitled *Cur Deus homo?* The depravity of man being premised, the necessity of a satisfaction, before pardon could be extended to the sinner, is traced to the punitive justice of God, as moral governor of the world. From the inability of the sinner, or of any other mere *creature*, to do more than the law requires for himself, he deduces the necessity, that the Redeemer must be more than a creature—must be one who did not himself owe any debt of obedience, and therefore he must be divine. As the satisfaction was to be for man, man also should participate in it: therefore the Redeemer should be both God and man, should be Theanthropos. The sufferings of the Godman being infinite, they were amply sufficient to satisfy for all the sins of the whole world. An additional reason why the Logos assumed human nature, was because as God alone he could not suffer, but was impassible: or in other words, it was necessary that the Redeemer should be man, that he might be able to suffer for us, and be God, that his sufferings might have efficacy to redeem us.\*

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\* See the author's "*Evangelical Lutheran Catechism*," p. 62. Q. 152. "*Are we able to make this satisfaction ourselves?* A. No; we cannot of ourselves even repent of our sins, and if by divine grace we are converted, our best services are so imperfect as not to merit acceptance even for the present; much less can our good works at any time exceed the demands of the law, and make satisfaction for past sins.

Other prominent writers fluctuated between the different systems. *Abelard* (died 1142) viewed the atonement as purely a work of *benevolence*, not required by the attributes of God as a condition of pardon; repentance itself being regarded as a sufficient basis for it. His views of sin, and of the divine holiness, were entirely superficial. The effects of the Saviour's suffering, he considered as purely *suasive*, designed to inspire the sinner with feelings of penitence. On the occurrence of these, he maintains, God can pardon the transgressor without any equivalent or satisfaction to the violated law. *Peter Lombard*, in the main preferred the theory of *Abelard* († 1164). *Bernard of Clairvaux* († 1153) was more evangelical, and inclined to the Anselmic theory.

The *Schoolmen*, especially of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, such as *Bonaventura* († 1272), *Alexander Hales* (1245), have discussed these subjects in all their metaphysical, as well as practical bearings, with consummate ability. *Thomas Aquinas*, the prince of scholastic divines, inculcated the same views of the work of the Godman in saving our sinful race, yet with increasing clearness and force, especially in his "*Summa Theologiæ*." He discriminated more clearly between the satisfaction made for the sins of men by the Saviour's sufferings, and the merit of his obedience to the law—that is, between the *active and passive righteousness* of Christ. By the manner in which he teaches the superabundance of Christ's righteousness, without counterbalancing it by the infinite demerit of sin, he prepared the way for the Romish doctrine of works of supererogation.

#### TRIDENTINE SOTERIOLOGY.

In close connection with these views is the Tridentine Soteriology, or the system of that portion of the Romish Church which resisted the light of the Reformation, merely revising and confirming the corrupt system developed in that Church through the lapse of ages. The members of the celebrated Council of Trent, convened in 1545, were employed, with various intervals, for eighteen years (till 1563), for the purpose of repairing the fearful damage done their doctrinal

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"Q. 153. *Could any mere creature make satisfaction for us?* A. No; for no creature, not even an archangel, could bear the weight of God's indignation at the sins of the world; nor could any creature perform more good works than the law requires for himself; hence none of them could be applied to the benefit of others."

system by the ever-memorable Reformation, and decided that the merits of Christ alone are not the ground of the sinner's salvation, but in connection with the *inward holiness*. They confound justification with sanctification, as Augustine and other fathers had occasionally done.

By this holiness or sanctification the Tridentine doctors understood, not external acts of holy living, but an internal state, or act of faith, wrought by the Holy Spirit. This act or state is not regarded as expiatory, but as a meritorious work of man; and thus justification is in part by works, contrary to the Scripture declaration, "*It is not of works*, lest any man should boast," Eph. ii. 9. Justification by faith alone the Romish Church condemns in unequivocal terms.\*

#### PROTESTANT SOTERIOLOGY.

But it was only in the Protestant Church, and especially from the pen of the chief Reformer, Martin Luther, that the New Testament doctrine of salvation by grace alone, without works, first found its most lucid and ample exhibition in this era. It was in the Protestant Church that the primitive lustre of this apostolic doctrine was revived in all its amplitude, and pursued through its different relations. The Anselmic view related mainly to the objective aspect of the atonement, and its bearings on the attributes and law of God as moral governor of the universe, whilst its application to the penitent sinner, his justification, was less carefully elaborated. The path of deep practical experience, through which Providence led Luther to a solution of the problem, *How can man be just with God?* also directed his chief attention to the practical and subjective aspects of these doctrines, and taught him to feel the necessity of an atonement for our actual sins, as well as our hereditary depravity. Hence he and his followers devoted more attention to the discussion of subjective justification than of the objective atonement, and in the different leading portions of the Protestant world this subject was fully discussed and understood in its several relations.

*a. Total and universal depravity, both natural or hereditary and ac-*

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\* "If any one shall say that justifying faith is nothing but confidence in the divine mercy, remitting sin on account of Christ, or that this faith is the sole thing by which we are justified: *Let him be accursed.*"—Canones Concil. Tridentin., de Justificatione, IX., XI., XII.

*tual, became the established doctrine of Protestantism.* Our fallen race are regarded as deeply guilty before God, and yet morally unable to effect their own deliverance, thus exhibiting the absolute *necessity* of the atonement.

*b. The vicarious atonement and righteousness of the Godman, the Saviour, are regarded as the only available plan of salvation for our race, and as fully sufficient for the redemption of all mankind.*

*c. And a living faith alone, without works, is regarded as the only condition on which the benefits of this redemption are dispensed to men.* This faith, wherever found, is always productive of good works. It works by love and purifies the heart and overcomes the world. It produces a holy life, which is, however, regarded not as a part of the condition of justification, but as an evidence of the genuineness of living faith: whilst all the glory of our salvation, in time and eternity, is ascribed to that Lamb of God which was slain for the sins of the world.

#### ESCHATOLOGY OF CHRIST.

The remainder of our Article relates to what may be termed the Eschatology of the Saviour, his Descent into *hades* (*ᾗδης*), his Resurrection, his Ascension and Return to Final Judgment.

On these remaining topics, interesting indeed, but of less practical importance than those which have claimed our attention, want of time forbids any more than a very brief notice.

We are told, "*He descended into hell,*" or *hades*, the place of departed spirits, in which both the righteous and the wicked are contained, separated from each other, indeed, by "an impassable gulf," yet within view or knowledge of each other, as seen in the case of "the rich man" and "Lazarus *afar off* in Abraham's bosom." It must not be forgotten that this clause, which our Confession quotes from the so-called "Apostles' Creed," is not found in the copies extant of that document during the first three centuries. But the existence of such an intermediate state, termed *sheol* by the Hebrews, and *hades* by the Greeks, supposed to be underground, into which both the righteous and wicked descend after death,\* was generally believed.

Different opinions were entertained as to the object, for which the

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\* Numbers xvi. 30, 33; Isaiah xiv. 15; Ps. lv. 15; Job vii. 9.

Godman descended to *hades*. The Form of Concord\* affirms that Christ descended into the lower regions, destroyed hell for believers, and snatched us from the power of death and Satan, and thus from the jaws of hell. Others supposed that he preached the gospel in *hades*, as well to believers who had lived before his incarnation, as also to the wicked. Others, amongst whom was also Calvin,† that he there *endured the pains of hell*—and others that he appeared there to announce himself as conqueror over death and hell (Hollazius, Quenstedt, Buddeus). Dr. Mosheim and others regarded this doctrine as a theological problem not fully solved in Scripture; yet there is enough revealed to show that it is a part of the Saviour's triumph over Satan, in the prosecution of the glorious work of redemption.

#### RESURRECTION OF THE SAVIOUR.

The next step in the Saviour's exaltation is his *Resurrection*. "*He arose on the third day*," says our Article. According to the Jewish method of calculation, fractions of a day were also counted as units, and days commenced at sunset. Hence the Saviour having been crucified on Friday about noon, the after part of the day was counted a whole one, Friday night and Saturday till sunset were the second, and Saturday night, belonging, according to the Jewish mode of calculation, to Sunday, together with Sunday morning, was the third day.

Although the truth of the resurrection of Christ has been disputed by some infidels, ancient and modern, its historical reality has been so frequently and so triumphantly established, that it has ceased to be a prominent point of attack. The resurrection of Christ consisted in the reunion of the soul with his body, and their coming forth from the tomb together. This risen body of the Saviour is called "*a glorious body*," "*a heavenly body*," "*a spiritual body*," (Phil. iii. 21; *ὡρανιον*, 1 Cor. xv. 48; Luke xxiv. 31–37). It has been disputed, whether the risen body of Christ was fully glorified before his ascension or not. Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret and others, believed the former, whilst Jerome and the Western theologians held the latter opinion. The importance of this doctrine is fundamental, 1 Cor. xv. 17; col. Rom. x. 9. To have been an eye-witness of the resurrection of Christ, was an essential qualification

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\* Art. IX., p. 551.

† Institut. Relig. Christ., p. 414.



of an apostle, Acts i. 21, 22; Luke xxiv. 47, 48. The Saviour had predicted his *own resurrection*, and tells us he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, John x. 18. This wonderful event was therefore effected by the divine power of the *Theanthropos*, and was an important step toward his completion of the work for which he appeared on earth, as well as a distinct advance in his progress to the throne of celestial glory.

#### ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

After spending forty days on earth, appearing among his disciples on such a variety of occasions, and under such various circumstances, as to leave no earthly doubt of his resurrection, and to afford him opportunity of imparting to his followers all necessary additional instructions; he ascended from Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, and as he lifted up his hands and blessed them, he was elevated from the view of the multitude, "a cloud received him out of their sight," and "he was carried up into heaven," Luke xxiv. 50, 51. The terms "up" and "down" being only relative terms, meaning toward or from the earth, or centre of attraction, we cannot regard them as determining the locality of heaven. Dr. Reinhard defines the ascension of the Saviour to be "that change by which Christ departed from this earth, to that august place which the Scriptures denominate heaven." It is the transition of the Saviour from earth to the blessed abode of God, of the holy angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. Whether this celestial state, or paradise, is a peculiar place or state, or whether it extends throughout all worlds, and is also around about us, is a question our present limited faculties cannot positively decide. *Pfaffius* believed heaven to be in the bosom of God himself, where angels and the spirits of the just made perfect will enjoy eternal rest: whilst J. D. Michaelis supposed the renovated earth to be the destined future abode of the blessed.

In heaven the *body* of Christ will certainly be fully glorified, will be like the glorified bodies of all saints, Phil. iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 42-53, and be, at least in some measure, unlike the one he had on earth after his resurrection, when he ate and drank material and corruptible food. In heaven the *Theanthropos* will be encircled with the glory which the Son of God had with the Father ere the world was, will exercise all authority in heaven and on earth, and

govern the universe for the benefit of his Mediatorial Kingdom and the glory of God. This is also involved in the inspired statement, that "*He is seated at the right hand of the Father*, that he might perpetually reign over all, and sanctify those who believe in him, by sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who governs, consoles, quickens and defends them against the devil and the power of sin. And that the same Christ will return again, that he may judge the living and the dead, according to the Apostles' Creed."

#### RETURN TO JUDGMENT.

This the Scriptures represent, in language apparently literal, as occurring in the clouds of heaven, accompanied by the celestial hosts and the resurrection of the dead. Whilst the great body of orthodox divines (Gerhard, Hollazius, Baumgarten, Buddeus, &c.) adopt a literal interpretation of the *leading* facts of this description, all admit a figurative explanation of some of the circumstances (such as opening the books, &c.) of this most solemn winding-up of the moral administration of God on the theatre of our earth. Acts xvii. 31; x. 42; Matt. xxv. 26-29; John v. 26-29; 2 Cor. v. 10; Phil. iii. 20.

Some divines suppose this solemn transaction will take place in the atmosphere (1 Thess. iv. 17), around or above us, as the earth would be too limited for a scene in which all the members of all generations that ever lived on earth are to be embraced. The term "day" (*ἡμερα*) of judgment is generally regarded as an indefinite period (Gerhard IX., 56; Michaelis 604), although if the limitations of time and space are removed from the soul in the future world, transactions now requiring years might occur in an hour. Persons who had been drowned and were resuscitated have asserted that in the act of drowning, that is, just before their consciousness ceased, the history of their whole lives, with numberless incidents, passed with inconceivable rapidity in review before them as in a single instant. The resurrection bodies, both of the righteous and the wicked, may, moreover, be transparent expressions of the thoughts and characters of the parties, and in them each one can read his or her destiny before the sentence is officially pronounced by the Judge; and this will be a publication sufficient of the deeds done in the body by all who are to receive their eternal, irrevocable sentence on *that most solemn, never to be forgotten day of judgment.*

## ARTICLE IV.

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# JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

BY M. VALENTINE, D. D., LL.D.

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“They in like manner teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works; but that they are justified gratuitously for Christ’s sake, through faith; when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are remitted for the sake of Christ, who made satisfaction for our transgressions by his death. This faith God imputes for righteousness before him.” (Rom. iii. and iv.)

THE Fourth Article of the Confession, now before us for discussion, brings us into the very heart of the great work of the Reformation. More than any other, it is the memorial Article of that sublime movement. It was for the Evangelical doctrine of Justification by Faith, as apprehended in the depths of Luther’s experience, that the struggle was begun. When the conflict was ended, and the pure Gospel restored, this Article in the Confession of the regenerated and living Church, stood as the firm monumental column of the victory. It presents the central doctrine, about which the other Articles took shape in clear harmony with each other, and in the living unity of the Gospel system. Not only for this truth, but in a peculiar manner *by* it, was the great work wrought. Set forth in its purity and power, it became the open channel through which the life-currents of Christ’s grace came again into a reviving Church. No truth from the armory of the divine word became so distinctively “the sword of the Spirit” in the conflict. D’Aubigne’s statement is apt and beautiful: “The powerful text, ‘The just shall live by faith’ was a creative word for the Reformer and the Reformation.” We cannot overestimate the historical and theological importance of the Article before us. Had our noble Confessors

been asked to name the special doctrine for whose recovery and restoration into the midst of the Christian system they were striving even unto blood, they would have pointed to this. Indeed, Melancthon did, in the very conflict at Augsburg, thus single out and exalt this as "the principal and most important Article of the whole Christian doctrine."\* Luther put it on the banner of the Reformation as the doctrine with which the Church must stand or fall. History has fully recognized this importance by not only characterizing it as the "material principle of the Reformation," but as the distinguishing fundamental doctrine of Protestantism.

Like the doctrine of the atonement, in close relation to which the truth of this Article stands, the doctrine of justification is one of pure revelation, and in its examination our appeal must necessarily be to the word of God. The suggestions of reason, and the dogmas of ecclesiastical authority, must all be held subject to its divine decisions. Thus we retain as inseparably joined with this "material principle of the Reformation," the sole authority of the Holy Scriptures, recognized with equal historic clearness as its grand "formal principle."

The general analysis of the Article is easy. It has been so framed as to present the whole doctrine of justification under its negative and positive aspects, the former as renouncing the errors which had obtained destructive sway in the Romish Church, and the latter as declaring the true doctrine of the blessed Gospel. We shall probably best accomplish our object, to set forth at once the teachings of our Church and the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, on this subject, by treating it under these two aspects, and noting the historical and theological relations thus involved. The specific points in the confessional statement will thus be indicated, and covered in the discussion.

#### I. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SELF-JUSTIFICATION.

The language of the Article is clear and emphatic: *Our Churches teach that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and be justified before God by our own strength, merits, or works.*" This, as the exhibition of the subject on its negative side, sets forth a truth that is fundamental in Christian doctrine. The Confessors could not have

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\* Apol., Art. IV. (II.)

maintained the integrity of the Gospel system of grace without this denial of a self-wrought righteousness.

1. The pressing necessity for it at the time was to witness against the false teaching of Rome. Her corruption of the doctrine of justification had been the point of the introduction of almost all the deadly errors that were holding sway over souls. Perversion of the truth here became an inevitable perversion of many of the most vital and practical forces of Christianity. It was, like an obscuration of the sun, the shrouding of everything in darkness. The heavy shadows of mediæval history, and the deep paralysis of the whole Church, bear painful testimony to the widespread consequences. The words of Luther on Gen. xxi. were verified in the sad experience: "This is the chief article of faith, and if it is taken away or corrupted, the Church cannot stand, nor can God retain his glory, which is that he may exercise mercy, and for the sake of his Son forgive and save." The manifold cry that was going up to heaven for a reformation of the Church arose from the hiding of the way of salvation in a perversion of this prime and vital doctrine. No correction of external abuses alone could heal her hurt and restore her health and power. The remedial process must touch the deep point whence all the disorders went forth. The error had hidden "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," from the view of perishing men. The false teaching of Rome was twofold:

*First*, Instead of exhibiting justification in its true nature as an external forensic act of God, she represented it as subjective and internal. The error was one of long growth. Its rise may be traced back through a development of centuries. The germ of it was involved in the statement of Augustine: "*Justificat impium Deus, non solum dimittendo, quæ mala facit, sed etiam donando caritatem, quæ declinat a malo et facit bonum per Spiritum Sanctum.*"\* The name and authority of Augustine, like a royal stamp on coin, gave currency to this representation. From this day the idea was developed, confounding justification with sanctification, and making it, not an objective divine act, but something subjective and transitive, constituting men internally and essentially righteous. It was regarded as a *making righteous* by the communication of the Divine life in fellowship with Christ. Perhaps, in its earlier announcement,

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\* Opus Cont. Jul. II., Ch. 168.



this view was meant to guard against the tendency to rely on a merely nominal faith, and to hold saving faith in its undivorced connection with the new life of grace. Without a divine vitality in union with faith, Christianity would lose its transforming and uplifting power. But, unfortunately, instead of showing the necessary relation of regeneration and sanctification to the faith in which God's justification of the sinner is conditioned, it introduced a confusion of thought and expression, in which the objective Divine act and the subjective attending change were confounded and identified. Most of the prominent Schoolmen made justification consist in the subjective character of the believer, as constituted intrinsically holy in the effectual operation of faith. The product of grace in the soul was made its basis and condition. By Thomas Aquinas it was represented as involving an infusion of the Divine life, *infusio gratiæ*. "*Justificatio primo ac proprie dicitur factio justitiæ, secundo vero et quasi improprie potest dici justificatio significatio justitiæ, vel dispositio ad justitiam. Sed si loquamur de justificatione proprie dicta, justitia potest accipi prout est in habitu, vel prout est in actu. Et secundum hoc justificatio dupliciter dicitur, uno quidem modo, secundum quod homo fit justus adipiscens habitum justitiæ, alio vero modo, secundum quod opera justitiæ operatur, ut secundum hoc justificatio nihil aliud sit quam justitiæ executio. Justitia autem, sicut et aliæ virtutes, potest accipi et acquisita, et infusa. \* \* Acquisita quidem causatur ex operibus, sed infusa causatur ab ipso Deo per ejus gratiam.*"\* This *infusio gratiæ* was necessary to the forgiveness of sin by God. Though some, by deeper experiences of grace, clearer recognition of the witness of their Christian consciousness, and better insight into Scripture teaching, were led to more objective views, *their* truer sentiments were so feebly sustained as to make no impression on the settled opinion. So that the decision of the Council of Trent may be regarded as setting forth the doctrine of the times on this point: "Justification is not remission of sins merely, but also sanctification and the renewal of the inner man by the voluntary reception of grace and divine gifts, so that he who was unrighteous is made righteous, and the enemy becomes a friend and an heir according to the hope of eternal life."† According to this

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\* Summ. P. II., I. Quoted by Hagenbach.

† "*Justificatio non est sola peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio et reno-*

justification becomes the renewal and transformation of the believer's nature. It is a transitive process, making him really and internally righteous. The vigorous vindication of this doctrine by Bellarmin, *De Justif.*, demonstrates the strength with which the error had laid hold of the mind of the age.

This view involves, as necessary sequence, the existence of *degrees* of justification, according to the extent of the Divine operation within the believer. Made to consist in a subjective holiness, of varied development but always imperfect, no certain assurance of forgiveness and acceptance with God could be enjoyed. For the evidence of his justification, the Christian had to look within himself, and measure it in the degree in which he had been made really righteous. He had to base his assurance of hope, not on the objective perfect righteousness and work of Christ, but on a righteousness wrought in partial measure by the Divine operation in his heart. What might be the minimum of infused righteousness necessary for justification could not be known. No one could settle the point of a sure grade of self-worthiness for acceptance before an infinitely holy God. Hence it was taught that no one could, without a particular revelation, be assured of his salvation. No wonder that Luther could find no peace for his stricken soul, till a truer view of justification shed the Divine light on his mind. No wonder that the Reformers so emphatically declare that the doctrine of Rome could give no relief and comfort to the sin-burdened conscience.\* As long as men are directed to look only on the righteousness that is personal and inherent in them, at the very best defective, and coupled with vile and condemning sin, it is impossible to find a reliable consolation and rest. The unhappy error stands in the boldest and most self-rebuking contrast with the declaration of St. Paul, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. v. 1.

The second element in the false teaching of Rome was the inclusion of good works in the ground of justification. Those were represented and looked upon as meritorious, and, at least in part, influential in securing the sinner's acceptance. It is but just, how-

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*ratio interioris hominis per voluntarium susceptionem gratiæ et donorum, unde homo ex injusto fit justus ex inimico amicus, ut sit hæres secundum spem vitæ æternæ.*" Conc. Trid., Sess. 6, Cap. 7.

\* Apol., Art. IV. (II.)

ever, to say that Rome did not mean to be understood as wholly and absolutely excluding the work of Christ from the foundation of the sinner's justification. In a certain sense there was a recognition of indebtedness to his redeeming grace for it. But the conception of Christ's relation to it was so confused and overloaded with qualifying explanations as to present, practically and really, a doctrine of justification by human works and merit. A certain ability to perform acceptable works without grace was claimed for man. And though grace was regarded as influential in engrafting the sinner's nature into the sources of the divine life, both in the earlier and later stages of the work there was an inclusion of the idea of worthiness and merit. The very products of grace, in the progressive justification which was based on intrinsic and growing holiness, were viewed as deserving and justly securing the favor of God. The human good work was represented as acting in *conjunction* with the merit of Christ, in attaining justification before God. Melancthon's declaration in the Apology expresses the result: "When the scholastics attempt to define how man is justified before God, they teach only the righteousness and piety of a correct external deportment before the world, and of good works, and in addition devise the dream that human reason is able, without the aid of the Holy Spirit, to love God above all things." "In this manner our adversaries have taught that men *merit* the remission of sins.\* The subtle distinction between *meritum de congruo* and *meritum de condigno*, originated by Thomas Aquinas, and employed by Romish theologians in explanation of their doctrine, does not save its character. For although Christ alone was represented as having originally and in himself a *meritum condigni*, yet a *meritum congrui* was claimed as attainable by the sinner prior to grace, and then the *meritum condigni* was connected with all his good works. Before his conversion, and independently of the *primam gratiam* or *habitu*, of which they sometimes spoke as gained for him by Christ, he could perform good works which formed this merit of congruity, rendering it meet, proper, equitable, and necessary for God to reward with grace. The Apology presents the idea clearly: "They maintain that the Lord God must of necessity give grace unto those who do such good works; not, indeed, that he is com-

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\* Apol., Art. IV. (II.)

pelled, but because this is the order, which God will not transgress or alter." Through this kind of merit he was supposed to attain the *habitus* or quickened disposition and inclination to love God. Then by love, patience, zeal, and good works, he attained the merit of congruity, which could claim a recompense and eternal life on the score of desert and justice. "The Papists," writes *Luther*, on Gal. ii. 16, "say, that a good work before grace is able to obtain grace of congruity (which they call *meritum de congruo*), because it is meet that God should reward such a work. But when grace is obtained, the work following deserveth everlasting life of due debt and worthiness, which they call *meritum de condigno*." Besides this, it must be remembered that they taught that Christ made satisfaction in his obedience and death only for original sin, leaving actual sins to be covered by the believer's penances and good works; denying, at the same time, that the Redeemer by His work and sufferings has secured any such righteousness as may be imputed to the sinner and justify him in the sight of God.\* The Gospel of grace was thus thoroughly overthrown in a more than semi-Pelagian scheme of justification by human strength and good works. The merit of Christ was displaced from its sacred position as the only and sufficient ground of the sinner's acceptance, and the way of grace was no more grace.

The following admirable summary of these aspects of the false teachings of Rome, is drawn from a treatise, "*De Justitia Inhaerente, contra Pontificios*," by John Peter Konow, Wittenberg, 1687. "In the first place the Papists teach that an adult, while yet unrenewed can, by the natural powers of his free will, with the aid of inciting and assisting grace, perform some spiritually good works. Not only is he able, but if he desires to be justified, he is obliged to perform acts of faith, fear, hope, love, penitence, reception of the provided sacraments, of new life and obedience to the commands of God. Just as in natural changes, certain dispositions must precede, by which the subject is prepared to receive the new form, so in justification, man, who is to undergo a spiritual change, must dispose and prepare himself for the attainment of righteousness."

They represent also that, through faith, which comes by hearing, man is freely moved toward God by believing those things which

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\* See Gerhard, *Loci*, Vol. VII., Cap. II.

have been revealed and promised by him, especially that the sinner is justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. This faith is itself the beginning, and, as it were, the first root of justification, which in a manner opens the way for fear, hope, love, and other equally needful dispositions; this alone is by no means sufficient. \* \* \* They teach further that these dispositions, among which faith is the first in order, are not merely results wrought in a passive subject, but belong to his active agency; not in the way of an instrumental cause, apprehending the merits of Christ, but as a meritorious cause, by its own proper act obtaining and deserving justification; not, indeed, *de condigno*, on the ground of justice and intrinsic goodness, but as acceptable to God, and fitting and honorable.

Now, after man has prepared himself in this way, they say that with the remission, that is, as they explain, the expulsion of sin, God infuses into him a principle (*habitus*) of righteousness, by which he is formally rendered righteous and accepted for eternal life. This *habitus* is not single and simple, but embraces principles, (*habitus*) of faith, hope, charity, and repentance. \* \* \* \* For justification is distinguished by the Papists into *first* and *second*. They call that the *first* in which sinful man becomes righteous, through infused principles of faith, hope, love, patience, &c. They make that the *second* by which the righteous man is made more righteous through works of righteousness, performed from the infused principles or inclinations, maintaining, nourishing, increasing, and perfecting an habitual righteousness. For this *first* justification they suppose the principle of faith, joined with the other infused principles of righteousness, sufficient. And so primarily regenerate infants are justified without any actual faith of their own. Thus, also, adults who do not continue to live after their conversion. With this difference, however, that infants are justified through the principle of faith, hope, and love alone, without any previous disposition, but adults through these same principles, preceded by dispositions from prevenient grace. Both are justified without the works of righteousness, performed from the infused principle—adults not without preparatory acts which are also numbered among good works. In the *second* justification, of adults who live after conversion and the remission of their sins, works of righteousness proceeding from the infused principles are also required; and these are



properly meritorious, deserving not only an increase of habitual righteousness, but also life and eternal salvation. \* \* \* \* But to state the whole doctrine in a few words, the Papists agree in representing the justification of man in the sight of God as three-fold. *First*, inchoative, in inceptive dispositions in which a formal righteousness is begun: *Secondly*, Formally, through an infused principle [*habitus*] of righteousness: *Thirdly*, meritoriously, through the exercise of the infused principle, or the works which follow that principle. All this righteousness of man thus justified in the way of inceptive dispositions, formally and meritoriously, they call *inherent*; whether it exist as a quality or an activity, and thus subsisting in the man, just as an attribute belongs to the subject in which it inheres. On account of this diversity they also distinguish inherent righteousness as Habitual and Actual. Habitual righteousness they treat as a permanent rectitude in the way of habits [*habitus*], or an infused principle out of which the rectitude of all the powers proceed, involving such spiritual affections in the believer, that, whenever he will, he may with readiness, ease, and delight, perform good works. To the Actual righteousness they refer, *first*, the person's dispositions of faith, fear, hope, and other acts in which they desire the habitual righteousness to be begun. Then also, principally and specifically, they place Actual righteousness in the exercise of the Habitual righteousness, and declare it to be nothing else than the endeavor after good works by which the Christian maintains his justification, and by truly deserving it, secures for himself both an increase of righteousness and eternal life and salvation." Cap. IV—X.

From this sad confounding of justification with sanctification in the doctrine of justification by an inherent righteousness, and the consequent belief in the meritoriousness of works, the way was open to the greatest absurdities and abuses. The deep poison of the error flowed out, in blighting power, through all the currents of the Church's life. It could not but be that practical piety, cut off from its sources of true vitality, should be perverted into multitudinous false and unseemly manifestations. The merit of work and ascetic self-culture became the very soul of the monastic seclusions, pilgrimages, penances, and the circle of perverted and perverting will-worship, which at once deformed the Christian life and disgraced the church of that day. From the doctrine of personal justification

by works, the step was easy to the conclusion that special zeal and devotion might do more than enough to justify. Here was the natural entrance of the doctrine of supererogatory works. These were regarded as forming a treasury of accumulated merit, at the disposal of the Church. Though at first the merits of Christ were held mainly to constitute the Church's treasure,\* the doctrine was developed so as to refer almost exclusively to the superabounding merits of the saints.† Out of this false doctrine arose the monstrous system of indulgences, into which the gross darkness of mediæval Christianity culminated. The confounding of justification with regeneration and sanctification, and looking upon it as inherent, thus proved the direful source of nearly all the Church's woes. It presented in vivid reality the truth of Luther's words, "*Faciente articulo justificationis omnia jacent.*" Against an error so dishonoring to Christ and fruitful of evils, the Confessors felt called upon to bear emphatic and solemn testimony. Fidelity to the Redeemer, to His truth, and to imperiled and perishing souls, could not otherwise be maintained.

2. In this witnessing against Rome, they were taking a position sustained and demanded by the Holy Scriptures. Their renunciation of the Papal error was simply a clear statement of the emphatic teaching of the word of God. Recurrence to a few passages will suffice to show the harmony of the Confession with the Scriptures, and the solemn urgency with which they guard against the idea of justification by our "own merit, strength or works."

"The man that doeth them shall live by them," Gal. iii. 12, is given as the rule of the "law of commandments." Perfect obedience is made the legal condition of acceptance before God. That this is impossible with man, is asserted in the harmonious voice of all the Scriptures. St. Paul, Rom. iii. 9, 10, declares, "We have proved both Jews and Gentiles under sin. \* \* \* There is none righteous, no, not one." "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every

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\* Alexander Halesius, Summa, P. IV., Art. 2. Indulgentiæ et relaxationes fiunt de meritis supererogationis membrorum Christi, et maxime de supererogationibus meritorum Christi, quæ sunt spiritualis thesaurus Ecclesiæ.

† Albertus Magnus, Sent., Lib. IV., Dist. 20, Art. 16. Indulgentia sive relaxatio est remissio poenæ injunctæ ex vi clavium et thesauro supererogationis perfectorum procedens.

mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," vs. 19, 23. From this condition of sin and condemnation, in which every man is by nature, there is declared to be no escape by his own strength, obedience, or works. "The law worketh wrath," Rom. iv. 15. "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight," Rom. iii. 20. "That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident: for the just shall live by faith," Gal. iii. 11. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness had been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin," Gal. iii. 21, 22. All that the law can do with sinners is to condemn, and occasion the knowledge of sin. In the way of bringing men to salvation, this is declared to be its distinct and only office. No guilty soul can struggle back into the favor of God, by observance of its requisitions. It is "a school-master" (*παιδαγωγός*, not an instructor, but a servant whose office it was to conduct children to and from the public schools,) to lead to *Christ*, as the only provided righteousness. In these and many other passages, reiterating this truth in multiplied forms and with earnest emphasis, the Reformers saw an absolute exclusion of the hope of salvation by human strength, or works. The sinner is left helpless and hopeless in himself. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse," Gal. iii. 10.

Not only in the general denial of justification by works, but in the particular repudiation of the idea of *merit*, were the Reformers but re-asserting a fundamental truth of God's word. The whole notion of merit, in which the false theory of justification had been based by Rome, is opposed by the clear teaching of Scripture. The principle is laid down by our Saviour, "When ye have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do," Luke xvii. 10. The best fulfilment of the law, and the purest attainments of holiness, do not go beyond duty, and are not regarded by God as earning any claim before him. Hence the unequivocal statement which totally excludes the notion of merit, "Ye are saved by grace—not of works, lest any man should boast," Eph. ii. 8, 9. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise, work is no more work," Rom. xi. 6. Even the smallest share of merit is

thus excluded from the observance of the law and the services of piety. Neither as supplementary to the work of Christ, nor in any combination with it, do the Scriptures tolerate a notion of human merit, in the foundation of the sinner's justification.

3. This teaching of the Divine word is fully sustained by the decisions of enlightened reason. In this, the truth is fortified with additional strength. It is true, that reason is not to sit as a judge of the doctrines of revelation. Its concurring conclusions, however, aid in fixing our conviction of these doctrines. The truths of the word stand out in clearer demonstration and power, when they at once make answer for themselves to every man's intellect and conscience. This truth is of this kind. Our Confessors, in throwing it into the bold foreground of their view of justification, were taking a position in which they could hear every voice from Scripture answered by consenting and confirmatory voices from the conscience and reason of mankind. The painful helplessness of our guilty race has ever been crying out, "Wherewith shall a man come before God, or bow himself before the Almighty?" Reason adjudges that an unfallen and sinless being may be accepted before God, on the principle, "He that doeth them shall live by them." An unbroken and perfect obedience by a holy being leaves no place for condemnation. But he that offends in a single point becomes a transgressor. And "there is no man that liveth and sinneth not." We must thus view our race, as it really is, under condemnation for original and actual sin. The question as it must come up before our reason, concerns the justification of *sinner*s, and the conclusion flows in rigid logical sequence from the premises. Sin, in its very nature, is a withholding from God what is his due. It involves opposition of the creature's will to him, and refusal of the obedience and service which belong to him. This withholding what is due to God becomes both a crime and a debt. Thus, not only the obedience withheld, but satisfaction for the crime, must be required of the sinner. He has not only fallen into fatal arrears, but come under the penalty of a law and government on whose sacred inviolability the peace and order of a moral universe are hung. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," as the eternal law of God's holiness and love, announces the destruction into which the transgressor has brought himself. With his fallen nature, he is now able neither to keep the law nor to render satisfaction for its past violation. He

cannot pay the debt. In his criminal inability, every effort to obey is defective and vitiated by sin. Could he even start anew, and render thenceforth a perfect obedience, the past would remain without satisfaction. All a man's powers, his time, his talents, his skill and service, belong to God. There is not a moment in which he can feel released from the claims of God upon him, not a power of body, a faculty of mind, an endowment of energy, which is beyond the obligation of entire consecration to him. And were he, as a creature, enabled thenceforth to give to God a perfect service, he would only be doing his present duty, and could have no surplus of time or powers to atone for the past and pay the dreadful debt. Thus, on both points, man must come fatally short. His works can no longer justify him. This part of our Article is, therefore, sustained by the clearest deductions of reason, as well as by the emphatic teachings of the word of God.

The deep and deadly error of Rome has thus been renounced. Faithful and true witness is borne against it. That doctrine maintaining the meritoriousness of good works, and teaching men to rely upon them for justification before God, was falsifying the Gospel, and laying another foundation than that which is laid in Jesus Christ. "Thus these men conceal Christ from us," exclaims Melancthon, "and bury him anew, so that it is impossible for us to recognize him as a mediator."\* It was the all-perverting error, in which centered the crying necessity of the Reformation.

## II. THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION.

A more concise, comprehensive, and vigorous statement of the positive side of this great doctrine could scarcely be framed: "We obtain forgiveness of sins, and are justified before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, if we believe that Christ suffered for us, and that our sins are remitted unto us for Christ's sake, who made satisfaction for our transgressions by his death. This faith God imputes for righteousness before him, Rom. iii. and iv." This presents all the principal truths in the teaching of the Gospel on the subject. It calls our attention to the four great and all-inclusive points: 1. *The Source of Justification*, "Grace," [*aus gnaden gratis*]; 2. *The Ground of it*, "For Christ's sake," "Christ

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\* Apol., Art. IV.



suffered for us"—"made satisfaction for our transgressions by his death;" 3. *The Nature of it*, "We obtain forgiveness of sins, righteousness and eternal life;" 4. *The Instrument*, "Through Faith." An intelligent view of the teaching of our Confession will be obtained by looking at these points in their order.

### 1. *The Source.*

This is the grace of God, which, in the technical language of Theology, is denominated the efficient cause, *causa efficiens*, of justification. "God forgives us our sins out of pure grace."\* "Justified freely by his grace," says St. Paul, Rom. iii. 24. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. It is needless to repeat the numerous texts which trace up our salvation to its source in the compassionate love and grace of God. They are varied and multiplied in rich profusion throughout the New Testament. Even faith, though most vitally involved in our justification, is in no sense its source or efficient cause. "It is God that justifieth," Rom. viii. 33, His own love having made the provision by which he can be just and yet thus justify the ungodly, Rom. iii. 25; iv. 5. The sense of the term grace, *χάρις*, as used in this connection, must be clearly distinguished. It expresses neither any divine act done for us, nor any quality or excellence wrought in us, but the mercy and benevolence of God toward us.† And this grace from which justification and salvation freely flow, must be referred to the one God, revealed as the Trinity in unity. "I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour," Is. xliii. 11. Whilst maintaining the order and distinction of the Persons in the Trinity, the Scriptures clearly refer to the whole Godhead, in pointing us to the primal source of the sinner's forgiveness and salvation. Hence our justification is interchangeably ascribed to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. John iii. 16; Gal. ii. 20; Rom. v. 5; Col. iii, 13; Is. liiii. 11;

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\* Form of Concord, Art. III.

† Melancthon, Loci Theo. De Gratia: Facessant Aristotellica figmenta de qualitatibus. Non aliud enim est gratia si exactissime describenda sit, nisi Dei benevolentia erga nos, seu voluntas Dei miserta nostri. Non significat ergo gratiae vocabulum qualitatem aliquam in nobis; sed potius ipsam DEI voluntatem seu benevolentiam Dei erga nos.

1 Cor. vi. 11. The connection of this fact with the use of the names of the three Persons of the Trinity in the formula of Baptism, is obvious and suggestive.

## 2. *The Ground of Justification.*

This, known as the meritorious cause, *causa meritoria*, is the whole work of Jesus Christ, by which he has atoned for human sins, and brought in a complete and everlasting righteousness: "Justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," Rom. iii. 24, 25. In this aggregate work of Christ, in which is laid the deep and secure foundation of our acceptance and salvation, there are three things to be considered:

1. It must be viewed as the work of the *Godman*. Both before and after the Reformation the question was agitated whether Christ is our righteousness, according to his divine or his human nature.\* The question was one which touched upon a deep and vital point of Christian doctrine, and the correct view becomes of great importance. The view that held to our justification by Christ's righteousness, according to his divine nature alone, confounded the true, essential, unchangeable righteousness of the Son of God, in his true natural and essential divinity, with that vicarious work which forms the meritorious righteousness provided in his obedience and death, and imputed to the sinner; whilst the view which held that Christ is our righteousness according to his human nature alone failed to include what is indispensable to the efficacy, value and perfection of his redeeming work. We can be justified only by Christ as our righteousness, according to both natures.

It is necessary carefully to distinguish between the essential and immutable holiness of the Son of God, in his divine nature, and that righteousness which he came and wrought out for our fallen race. The essential holiness of that nature must indeed be recognized as a necessary condition of his work for us, but it is different

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\* Peter Lombardus, III., Sent. Dist. 19. Christus mediator est in quantum homo, nam in quantum Deus non Mediator, sed æqualis est Patri.

*Busæus*, Disp. de Persona Christi: Christus est mediator tantum secundum humanam naturam. Quoted from Gerh. Loci Theol., Loc. XVII., Cap. 2. See Osiandrian Controversy, in Ch. Hist.

from it. Neither his human nature nor his divine nature intrinsically is the basis of our justification, but the work done, the life lived, the obedience maintained, the sufferings endured for us in the one person of the Godman. The point is, that in looking for the ground of our justification we are not to regard the intrinsic *character* of the Deity of Christ as imputed to us, but the "obedience unto death," which he in his sinless Theanthropic person has provided as the basis of our pardon and acceptance. It is what he has done and furnished in the economy and work of redemption. Because of his sinless divine holiness he *could* become our righteousness, but he has actually become such *by* all that, in the unity of his divine-human person, he has done to supply what we had *not* done, and to release us from the consequences of our sins. This *work* of the Son of God for us must be viewed as including his incarnation—the very act of his becoming Godman, in which he also becomes "our righteousness." In other words, he became "*our* righteousness" only in his becoming the Godman and the work then wrought in the union of both natures for us. In the Divine nature alone he could not have suffered and died, and without the communion of the Divine with the human in the unity of one person, the sufferings and obedience of Christ would have lacked the infinite merit necessary to their atoning efficacy. Hence the Form of Concord states with admirable clearness: "Christ is our righteousness, neither according to the divine nature alone, nor yet according to the human nature alone, but the *whole Christ*, according to both natures, in or through that obedience alone which he, as God and man, rendered to the Father even unto death, and by which he has merited for us forgiveness of sins and eternal life." Epit. iii. 1. "In this manner neither the divine nor the human nature of Christ by itself is imputed to us for righteousness, but the obedience of the person alone, who is at the same time God and man. Thus, too, the disputed point concerning the indwelling of the essential righteousness of God\* in us must be rightly explained. For though God,

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\* This was the precise form of the error of Osiander, whose controversies distracted the Church for some years, prior to the Form of Concord. Misapplying some of Luther's expressions concerning the indwelling of Christ in the soul, through faith, he represented Christ as the righteousness of the believer by being *in* him. "Through the Word dwelling in us, we are justified." "The Gospel has two parts: the first, that Christ has satisfied the justice of God; the second, that he purifies and justifies us from sin, by dwelling in us." Quoted from Wieseler, Ch. Hist. IV., pp. 470, 471.

the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who is the eternal and essential righteousness, dwells, through faith, in the elect, who are justified through Christ and reconciled to God (for all Christians are temples of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost), yet this indwelling of God is not that righteousness of faith concerning which St. Paul speaks, and which he calls *justitia Dei*, that is, the righteousness of God, on account of which we are justified before God."\*

2. It embraces Christ's *active obedience* for us. The whole of Christ's earthly work must be regarded as vicarious. To act in our stead, He was "made under the law." His incarnation, in which is seen the incipient act in his becoming "*our* righteousness," was preparatory not only to suffering for our sins, but to fulfilment of the law for us. An atonement, made by sacrificial death, releasing from an incurred penalty, is in itself not the full bringing in of a perfect righteousness by the imputation of which we will have all that we need. More than the negative condition of being simply pardoned, is necessary. We need to be looked upon as if we were positively righteous. The obedience of Christ, in which the law was kept and honored, was an essential element in furnishing for us what the Law and holiness of God demanded of us. Where we were sinners, he, acting mediatorially in a vicarious life, was perfectly righteous. This sinless active obedience of the Godman, must be viewed not simply as a needful condition to an efficaciously atoning death, but as being in itself an essential part of that righteousness which is imputed to us. Before men could inherit the blessings promised to obedience, the Divine Substitute had to fulfil for them all its holy precepts. *Buddeus* has presented the truth clearly: "Christ did not only expiate our sins by his sufferings and death, but through his whole life most completely fulfilled the law in our stead. He thus made satisfaction for us, not only by a most precious sacrifice to offended Deity, but also by performing everything which the divine justice, so infinitely offended by the sins of men, could demand. Thus all obligation to punishment ceased and was taken away, and God, being thus reconciled, is prepared to forgive all our sins, and to receive us into the number of his children, when we embrace the merits of Christ in true faith."†

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\* Form Con., Decl. III.

† *Buddeus*, Inst. Theol. Dog., Lib. IV., Sec. 37: Non tantum Christus passione et morte sua nostra peccata expiavit, sed per totam vitam, legem divinam pro

The inclusion of Christ's active obedience in the ground of justification is a point of great importance. From the earliest ages of the Christian Church much stress was laid on this part of his work. Though his death has always been recognized as the crown of his saving love, his work was represented as carried on through all the stages of his life. This truth is involved in the well-known passage in Irenæus, in which he speaks of Christ's advancing through infancy, youth, and manhood, saving all ages, by living and acting for all.\* Both the perfect obedience of Christ, and the shedding of his blood as a ransom, unite in the system of Irenæus, but he seems to have held the idea of a sacrifice in the background. *Gregory of Nyssa* mentions it, as an element in the work of redemption, that Christ maintained a pure disposition through all the moments of his life.† In the scholastic age the active obedience of Christ continued to hold a high place in theological representations of the Redeemer's vicarious work. So prominently did *Anselm* (A. D., 1093-1109,) make this, that in the history of doctrines it is made a question whether he did not altogether exclude the *Satisfactio passiva* from his view of Redemption.‡

Some modern theologians, however, exclude the active obedience of Christ from being, immediately and in itself, a part of the ground of justification. They admit that this obedience was indeed necessary, but only as a condition pre-requisite to fit him to offer a pure and acceptable sacrifice. Had he himself sinned, his sufferings could not be regarded as vicarious and accruing to the benefit of others. They connect his active obedience, not with the provision of a righteousness for us, but with his qualification to furnish an effectual vicarious sacrifice. A just and full view of Christ's work, as the ground of our justification, must pronounce this theory defective and

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nobis accuratissime implevit; et ita pro nobis satisfecit, dum non tantum sacrificio infiniti valoris iratum Deum placavit, sed et ea omnia accurate praestitit, quae justitia divina hominum peccatis infinitum in modum laesa, exigere poterat; adeo ut omnis obligatio ad pœnam cesset, prorsusque sit sublata, Deus vero utpote hac ratione reconciliatus, omnia peccata, quae admiserunt, modo vera fide meritum Christi apprehendant, illis remittere et condonare eosque in numerum filiorum suorum recipere paratus sit.

\* Iren., II., 224.

† Hagenbach, Hist. Doc., I., p. 380.

‡ See Neander, Hist. Dog., p. 517, and Hagenbach, Hist. Doc., II., p. 38.



inadequate. If the doctrine is correct, which presents the righteousness by which we are justified as not the intrinsic holiness of the Saviour's divine nature, but the *work done by him in his Theanthropic Person, on behalf of sinners*, it follows directly and necessarily, that we must regard him as not only furnishing a basis of pardon by his innocent sufferings, but a ground of acceptance by fulfilling for us all righteousness. Hence whilst the Confession is silent on this precise point, the authors of the Form of Concord, who have most sharply and correctly presented the full doctrine of this Article, have included the *Satisfactio activa* in varied and emphatic phrase. They ground justification on "*the entire obedience of the whole Christ.*" They mention both his "obedience," and his "bitter sufferings," as included. "Faith looks upon the person of Christ, as the same was made under the law for us, bore our sins, and when proceeding to the Father rendered entire and perfect obedience to his heavenly Father for us poor sinners, from his holy birth unto his death; and thereby covered all our disobedience which inheres in our nature, in its thoughts, words, and deeds." Hence that righteousness, which is imputed to faith, or to believers, before God, through grace alone, is the obedience, the sufferings, and the resurrection of Christ, by which he has rendered complete satisfaction unto the law for us, and made expiation for our sins. For, since Christ is not only man, but God and man in one undivided person, he was as little subject to the law, being Lord of the law, as it would have been necessary for him to suffer and die for his own person. "*His obedience, therefore, not only in suffering and dying, but in his being voluntarily put under the law in our stead, and fulfilling it with such obedience, is imputed unto us for righteousness; so that, for the sake of this perfect obedience, which he rendered unto his heavenly Father for us, in both doing and suffering, in his life and death, God forgives us our sins, accounts us as righteous and just, and saves us eternally.*" \*

Scripture proof of the correctness of this view may be seen by a reference to a few passages. Rom. v. 19, St. Paul declares, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The reference is admitted to be to the justification of the sinner through Christ. Were

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\* Form Con., Dec., Art. III.

it based on his *death* alone, the use of the different and comprehensive term *obedience* would be unaccountable. It may, and must, indeed, be regarded as including his "*obedience unto death*," or his suffering, but refers more directly to the aggregate work of satisfying the demands of the law. From the antithesis of the word to the disobedience of Adam, his active obedience, rather than his sufferings, seems to be the prominent idea.\* "The entire holy life of our Saviour," says Tholuck, "is termed *ὑπακοή*, embracing in indivisible unity what the Church has termed the *obedientia activa*, and *obedientia passiva*." In loco. In v. 18, the apostle expresses the same idea in another form: "By the righteousness, *δικαιώματος*, of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification, *δικαίωσιν*, of life." In this passage the term "*righteousness*" seems to be the equivalent of "*obedience*," in v. 19. They are alike connected with justification, and are terms of more comprehensive import than would have been used had the apostle nothing in his view but Christ's death. The same doctrine is implied in Ps. xl. 8, compared with John iv. 34.

3. It is completed in Christ's *passive obedience*. The Confession gives prominence to this because it presents the most central conception of the atonement. As the basis of justification it refers to the great unparalleled fact, "Christ suffered"—"made satisfaction for our transgressions by his death."

The most casual reading of the Scriptures is sufficient to impress every one with a conviction of the vital relation of Christ's sufferings and death with the sinner's salvation. Text follows text, and declaration is added to declaration to keep Jesus before the sinner's view as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

The Old Testament points to this part of his mediatorial and saving work in type and shadow, bleeding victims and smoking altars, temple arrangements and prophetic announcements. Isaiah directs to a suffering Saviour, stricken, smitten, making his soul an offering for sin, and justifying many because of bearing their iniquities. Daniel beholds him as cut off, but not for himself. In the New Testament we hear Christ himself declare, as he approaches the dreadful hour, "For this purpose I came unto this hour." And though his disciples at first could not understand this, and stumbled at it,

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\* See Hodge in loco.

after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, leading them into the truth, they were ready to exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ." They resolved to know nothing among men but Christ and him crucified, and preached this as the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation. It is made the ceaseless theme of the Word of God.

The sufferings of the Redeemer have their relation to the punishment due our sins. As his life fulfilled all the requirements of the law in our stead, his agony and death satisfied all the penalty denounced upon our transgressions. "The wages of sin is death." But "when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly," Rom. v. 6. God "hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many," Matt. xx. 28. The Church is spoken of as "the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood," Acts xx. 28. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," Gal. iii. 13. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood," Rom. iii. 25. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures," 1 Cor. xv. 3. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," 1 Cor. v. 7. "God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him," Rom. v. 8, 9. "We also joy in God, by whom we have now received the atonement," Rom. v. 11. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," Heb. ix. 12. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many," Heb. ix. 28. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ," 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree," 1 Pet. ii. 24. These passages and many others, illuminating all the pages of the New Testament with the light of redemption, set forth unequivocally, and with all the fervor of the Gospel message, that Christ in the unity of his two natures in one person, and acting in a vicarious character, bore the curse and punishment due to us, expiated all our offences, honored

and satisfied the law, so that God might be just, and yet pardon and accept the ungodly.

The reason why, since the fall, such vicarious obedience and suffering are necessary to the sinner's forgiveness and salvation, is found in the necessity of maintaining the inviolable sanctity of the Divine law and holiness. The wicked could not be justified on the simple ground of repentance and reformation. Repentance and reformation can have no atoning power over the past. It can neither satisfy the penalty of the broken law, nor vindicate the holiness and justice of God against the fearful crime of already committed sin. God must "declare his righteousness," as well as set forth his mercy. Thus the glorious message of salvation does not come as a departure from justice, or any relaxation of its demands, but offers its gracious blessings through the substitutionary fulfilment of both the practical and penal requirements of the law, by which mercy and truth have met together, and unite in perfect harmony.\* "Once for altogether, Christ has done enough to remove the sins of all who come to him and believe on him." Luth., on 1 Pet. iii. 18.

### 3. *The Nature of Justification.*

In the brief but clear terms of the Confession, amplified in the Apology and Form of Concord, the doctrine of the Gospel and of our Church on this point is most satisfactorily defined. Justification is mentioned as "the remission of sins," and the bestowal upon us of "righteousness and eternal life." The three essential elements of its nature are here involved:

1. Its judicial and objective character.† In this, it contains a clear

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\* Augustine, Ps. 100. Homines quando judicunt, aliquando victi misericordia faciunt contra justitiam, et videtur in eis esse misericordia et non esse judicium, aliquando vero rigidum volentes tenere judicium, perdunt misericordiam. Deus autem nec in bonitate misericordiæ perdit judicii severitatem, nec in judicando cum severitate amittit misericordiæ bonitatem.

† Chemnitz. Paulus articulum justificationis ubique describit tanquam processum judicalem, quod conscientia peccatoris coram tribunali Dei lege divina accusata, convicta et sententiæ æternæ damnationis subjecta, confugiens ad thronum gratia restituitur, absolvitur et a sententia damnationis liberata, ad vitam æternam acceptatur, propter damnationem et intercessionem filii Dei mediatoris, quæ fide apprehenditur et applicatur.

Quenstedt (III., 526). Justificatio est actus Sanctissimæ Trinitatis externus, judicialis, gratus, quo hominem peccatorem gratis propter Christi meritum



and absolute repudiation of the theory, which had been maintained, and still is, by Romish and some Protestant theologians. Over against all the notion of justification by an inherent righteousness, confounding justification with sanctification, the Reformers rigorously asserted the objective and forensic nature of this act, as an essential distinction in sound and Biblical theology. Although the language of Melancthon, in the Apology, is, in a few cases, ambiguous on this point, undoubtedly the whole tenor of it, and many distinct and definitive passages, set forth its nature as outward and judicial. And the Form of Concord declares, "If we wish to retain in its purity the Article concerning justification, great diligence and care are to be observed, lest that which precedes faith and that which follows it, be at the same time intermingled and introduced into the Article concerning justification, as necessary and pertaining to it. For it is not one and the same thing to speak of conversion and justification." "For, though the converted and believing have an incipient renewal, sanctification, love, virtue, and good works, yet these cannot and must not be referred to the article of justification before God, and confounded with it; so that Christ the Redeemer may not be deprived of his glory, and troubled consciences may not, since our new obedience is still imperfect and impure, be robbed of their sure consolation."

The proof of the external and forensic, or perhaps, more properly, *governmental* nature of justification, is made manifest by a reference to a few passages of the Word of God. It is involved in the use of the word *to justify*. The Hebrew **צָדַק**, translated by the Seventy into the Greek words, *δικαιῶν, δικαιοῦσθαι, δίκαιον, κρίνειν*, which are used in the New Testament to express this truth, includes the idea of an objective forensic acquittal.\* Ex. xxiii. 7, "I will not justify the wicked," refers to no inner change, but to a relation to

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fide apprehensum remissis peccatis, justum reputat, in gloriosae gratiae ac justitiae laudem et justificatorum salutem.

Hollaz. Justificatio est actus judicialis isque gratus, quo Deus satisfactione Christi reconciliatus peccatorem in Christum credentem, ab objectis criminibus absolvit et justum aestimat atque declarat. Quae actio, cum sit extra hominem in Deo, non potest hominem intrinsecus mutare.

\* **צָדַק** in Kal est justitiam habere, in Piel justitiam alicui tribuere, in Hiphil in judicio aliquam absolvere et justitium pronunciare, in Hithpael, se ipsum justificare et causæ suæ bonitatem demonstrare. Gerh., Loc. Theol., Locus De Justificatione, Proee., § III.



the law. In Prov. xvii. 15, "He that justifieth the wicked and he that condemneth the innocent are both an abomination in the sight of the Lord," the antithesis is between justification and condemnation, and both are objective in their character. In Matt. xii. 37, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned," there is no idea of an inner change, but a forensic decision. In Rom. v. 18, 19, and throughout the chapter, the nature of this doctrine is distinctly unfolded, and it is set forth in the clearest light as judicial and external. It is wrapped up in legal terms and relations. The phraseology implies a judge, guilt before the law, and an acquittal, by virtue of "the righteousness of One" who has made an "atonement." The judgment is to condemnation, *εἰς κατάκριμα*, the grace, to justification, *εἰς δικάωσις*. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth," Rom. viii. 33, implies a judicial accusation, and a free divine absolution. Most plainly is this aspect of truth included in the representation of justification in 2 Cor. v. 19-21: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. \* \* \* For He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." A correspondence is thus traced between it and the way in which Christ was made sin for us. We are made "righteousness" in Christ, in the same manner as he was made sin for us. But Christ was not made sin for us by actually becoming a sinner, but by bearing our sins imputatively. So we are justified, not by being made intrinsically righteous, or by an infusion, but only *actu forensi*.\* In short, the word to justify means, properly and generically, to pronounce any one righteous, either when he truly is so, or is really unrighteous. And it is to be remembered, that in the justification of the believer, the person is in fact a sinner, and the act is not a declaration of real moral character. It is not a divine judgment in reference to the moral condition of its object, but a holding of the truly guilty as acquitted for the sake of the vicarious sacrifice and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

2. It consists partly in pardon. "Forgiveness of sins before God," "for Christ's sake our sins are remitted to us," are the phrases in which our Confession describes it. The frequency with

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\* See Cotta's Note, Ger. Loci, Locus XVII.

which it sets it forth by these terms, indicates how accurately and fully they were regarded as expressing its nature. Forgiveness of sins, and justification before God, are used as interchangeable terms, though in fact justification was acknowledged as including in its full meaning somewhat more than pardon. The Scriptures themselves use the word justification, as an equivalent to forgiveness. St. Paul, in describing justification, Rom. iv. 7, 8, quotes as an Old Testament statement of it, the words of David, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." So, too, in Acts xiii. 38, 39: "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." On the divine basis of Christ's atonement, in which the penalty of sin has been suffered and the law satisfied, God freely forgives the penitent and believing sinner all his transgressions. On the ground of that death of the Just for the unjust, our offenses are wholly blotted out. The sinner is pardoned and looked upon in Christ, as though he had never sinned. It is a full absolution. He is acquitted of all charges and released from all penalties. God no longer imputes or charges to the sinner the offences of which he had been guilty. There is now no *condemnation*, to them who are in Christ Jesus.

3. It is completed in the *imputation of Christ's righteousness*. This meets the necessities of the sinner's case, in a relation which reaches beyond the simple matter of pardon. Being forgiven, he is not left in the condition of a criminal merely released from punishment. He needs be held not only as absolved from wrath, but as having an acceptable righteousness. His condition must not be a mere negation, but one of positive fullness. Divested alike of his own sins and righteousness, he is not to be held henceforth as miserable and poor and naked, but as clothed in spotless garments and made rich indeed. Hence, in the very act of justification, along with the non-imputation of his sins, God imputes Christ's perfect righteousness to him. Thus, while pardon takes away from the sinner what he has, this imputation gives him what he has not. On one side the penalty of his transgressions is removed, and on the other, the complete righteousness of the Redeemer is placed to his account. The two sides of his need are thus fully met, in the substitutionary provision

of saving grace. The accuracy and beauty of the language of the Confession is, therefore, plainly seen, when, in addition to pardon, it declares "righteousness and eternal life are bestowed upon us." "For God regards this faith, and imputes it as righteousness in his sight, Rom. iii. and iv."

This is the great doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which stands so centrally in the faith of orthodox Protestantism. It presents with vigor that grand and comforting truth of the Gospel, that the believer is "*complete* in Christ who is the Head of all principality and power." Able to work out for himself neither pardon nor righteousness, both are provided in the Saviour's work, and freely and fully bestowed upon him in justification. Merely to forgive the sinner, and let him go, would not be a restoration to the blessedness of the Divine favor from which he is fallen. He needs to be taken back, and treated as righteous, in the fullness of fellowship and love. He is not left poor, but made rich. "For your sakes He became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." 2 Cor. viii. 9. He is clothed in the wedding garment, Matt. xxii. 2-13. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth," Rom. x. 4. Instead of his own sin, the obedience of him who is "the Lord, our righteousness" is imputed to him. "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works," Rom. iv. 3-6. The fact that sometimes the "righteousness of Christ," and at other times, our "faith," is said to be imputed to us, involves no contradiction. For faith is introduced merely as apprehending and appropriating the righteousness which is then set down to our account. Moreover, in the distinction made between pardon and this imputation, we are not to suppose any real division of the act of justification. Though forgiveness of sins is based entirely on Christ's atoning work, and the imputation of his righteousness implies a reference to his whole obedience for us, our acceptance of Christ secures the benefit of both, which are thus united in the same act of justification. The one divine act of justification brings us both pardon of our past sins

and the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness. It is, also, in this way clearly distinguished from a divine judgment upon the intrinsic character of the sinner, and becomes a free declaration of a gracious absolution and acceptance of the really guilty. And the whole nature of the act is summed up vigorously in the Form of Concord, "We believe, teach, and confess \* \* \* that poor sinful man is justified before God, that is, absolved and declared free from his sins, and from the sentence of his well-deserved condemnation, and is adopted as a child and heir of eternal life, without any merit or worthiness, and without any antecedent, present or subsequent works, out of pure grace, for the sake of the merit, the perfect obedience, the bitter sufferings and death, and resurrection of Christ our Lord alone, whose obedience is imputed unto us for righteousness."

#### 4. *The Relation of Faith to Justification.*

The Confession declares we are justified "through faith—*per fidem, durch den glauben*. These terms express the *instrumental cause* of justification. This point is of such vital importance, and lies so truly in the very heart of this great doctrine of our Church, that its meaning and relations cannot be too accurately and fully grasped. The very characterizing feature of the Gospel is, that it presents salvation as attained through faith. It so fully expresses the essence of the system, that "the faith," is made a synonym of Christianity. And both the object and the power of the Reformation, consisted in the disclosure of the full and indubitable relation of faith to the sinner's justification and salvation. There are three elements in which its nature and office are seen.

1. *Knowledge is implied.* This is the first element of the definition of the older theologians, in which faith is made to consist in knowledge, *notitia*, assent of the mind, *assensus*, and confidence or trust, *fiducia*. The definition is to be accepted as, in substance, correct, but it needs some guarding statements. Undoubtedly, the historical facts and doctrinal verities of the Gospel must be known before the sinner can accept the hope and blessings they offer. Men must know the truth before it can make them free. "And this is eternal life, to know thee the true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. Conviction of sin and sense of spiritual need are divinely wrought through the truth in the hands of the Holy



Spirit. Yet, however essential a knowledge of the objects of faith may be to its exercise, it is generically different from faith itself. It is rather a pre-requisite to faith. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Rom. x. 14. The contents of the logical understanding are not the same as an act of faith. And though our Saviour does ~~not~~ speak of knowing, *γινώσκειν*, the true God and Jesus Christ as eternal life, the eternal life is not the *immediate* result of the knowledge, but the knowledge leads to faith, according to St. Paul's words to Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, *through faith in Jesus Christ*," 2 Tim. iii. 15. Men may have knowledge, even in richest stores, without a particle of real, saving faith. A mere acquaintance with the historical truths and wondrous doctrines of the Gospel, as treasures of the understanding, cannot, in itself, unite the human life to the life of Christ. On this point our Confessors fully rejected the Romish doctrine of the nature of faith. There had been no sharp or true distinction of essential faith from mere historical or doctrinal knowledge. "Our adversaries think that faith consists in knowledge of, or an acquaintance with, the history of Christ."\* Art. XX., defining faith, declares, "The Scriptures, speaking of faith, do not style faith such a knowledge as devils and wicked men have; for it is taught concerning faith in Heb. xi. 1, that a mere knowledge of the facts of history is not faith." The deep intensity of Luther's experience, in which he came into a true apprehension of the Gospel plan, and repose in Christ as his Saviour, necessarily led to a clear distinction of faith from this merely intellectual knowledge. It was impossible that he should teach a system in which these two things should be confounded. Melancthon's experience concurred with Luther's; and the frequency with which he repeats, in the Apology, the caution against mistaking knowledge for faith, discloses how strongly he wished to place the doctrine of the Gospel on this point over against the error of Rome.

2. It implies the assent of the understanding. These truths and doctrines of Christ must not only be known, but approved. Their excellence and adaptedness must be recognized in an assenting judgment of the intellect. But here, as in knowledge, this assent is

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\* Apol. Art. IV. (II).



rather a condition precedent to saving faith than faith itself. It is what may be accurately designated as *historical faith*. It is a yielding of the judgment to the contents of the knowledge. "It is not enough for us to know and believe that Christ was born, that he suffered and rose from the dead."\* This is a belief which the devils may have, without any submission of will or affections to the terms of pardon and salvation. The assent of reason to the truth, divinity, and reliableness of the remedial scheme of grace, though essential as a preliminary basis for the act of appropriating the offers of salvation, in which the essence of faith consists, must yet be regarded as but partial and inadequate. This represents the condition of the masses in Christian lands, who intellectually admit and consent to the truth and excellence of Christianity, but who live in utter indifference and neglect of Christ and salvation. The reason of the inadequacy of this merely assenting judgment of the mind is plain. It lies altogether in the sphere of the natural. It is only the same kind of mental assent as is given to any other historical or scientific truths. It implies no supernatural operation, as a work of grace in the heart, and fails to surrender the affections and life to the power and control of Christ.

3. The essential thing, which itself constitutes the reality and fullness of faith, is *Trust* or *Confidence*. It is the *fiducia* of the old theologians, and expresses the act in which the penitent reposes on the merit and grace of the Redeemer. In it he accepts Christ, who is a perfect Saviour, and lays an appropriating hold of him, as He has been made unto him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. It brings the believing soul and Christ together. Faith takes Christ just as he is offered, in all the fullness of his redemption and offices of salvation, and reposes in the infallible promises of his love. It is essentially an appropriating act, and one of self-surrender; and whilst knowledge and assent belong wholly to the logical understanding, this surrender to Christ in confidence and reliance embraces the action of the will and the sensibilities. Hence St. Paul declares, with striking definiteness and force, "*With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.*"†

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\* Apol. Art. IV.

† The error of Rome on this point is seen in the words of Bellarmin, Justif. i. 4, Catholici fidem in intellectu sedem habere docent. Denique in ipso actu intellectus.

We must not fail to understand that this faith makes a real appropriation of the merit of Christ. It truly "puts on Christ." The imputation of his righteousness is not to be supposed to be based upon anything short of such a vital union as is expressed by the apostle, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." It is not by what faith *is*, that it justifies, but by what it embraces. It justifies not as a virtue, or intrinsic state of the soul, but as holding within its embrace Christ himself, in all his work and fullness. The divine Judge does not set over to the believer's account, as a liquidation of his debt, and as accepted righteousness, what his faith has not really grasped. Faith must, therefore, be regarded as apprehending the gracious work and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Hence, Luther's expression, "Faith taketh hold of Christ, and hath him present, and holdeth him enclosed, as the ring doth the precious stone. And whosoever shall be found having this confidence in Christ apprehended in the heart, him will God account for righteous." On Gal. ii. 16. "This is the record that God hath given to us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son," 1 John v. 11. Hence it is that "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life," 1 John v. 12. Yet it is not to be understood that it is *Christ's indwelling* that becomes the *ground* of justification, but thus we are put by faith in such relation to him that *his whole obedience, even unto death*, is imputed to us. It is through such a reception of him, in the act of faith, that we appropriate the benefits of his vicarious work.

The *particula exclusiva*, the expression *alone*, by which the Reformers guarded so jealously the purity of the relation of faith to justification, was not only demanded by the antagonism of Rome to it, but by the interests of the truth and the Church for all ages. Against all schemes that admitted anything before, after, or alongside of Christ apprehended by a divinely wrought faith, it reasserted the truth into which the Holy Ghost had guided the apostle Paul, Rom. iii. 28. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

4. This faith is contemplated not as a product of nature, but as a gift of God. In Art. II. it is, in accordance with Scripture, declared that human nature since the fall is so under the power of original sin that it can of its own accord exercise no true faith in God. Con-

sistently with this the Apology, Art. IV., sets forth, "Faith is the acceptance of this treasure [Christ's merit] with our whole heart, and this is not our own act, present, or gift, our own work or preparation." "This faith is a gift of God, through which we rightly acknowledge Christ our Redeemer in the word of the Gospel, and confide in him."\* It is our confessional response to the divine word, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," Eph. ii. 8.

5. This act, as well as the subsequent life of faith, is to be rigorously separated from the idea of merit. Because of its instrumental relation, as conditioning our acceptance before God, there has been a disposition to look upon it as itself a good and meritorious work. There is no deserving worthiness in it. The only worthiness is in Christ, and faith, being itself God's gift, is only the hand that receives the blessings of redemption. Its only activity is that of accepting God's free salvation, and this activity itself is through the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit. The author of the Confession, therefore defines: "Faith does not justify us before God, as though it were itself our work, but solely because it receives the grace promised and offered without merit, and presented out of the rich treasures of mercy."† This is fully accordant with the statements of Scripture and the conclusions of reason. Though faith be accepted and imputed for righteousness, it is still, like every other grace in man, defective and incomplete, and, therefore, cannot become a foundation of confidence. So soon as the believer would trust to the worthiness of his faith, he would turn to something wrought within him and deny Christ as the only foundation. Melancthon, to J. Brentz, 1531, writes, "Faith alone justifies, not because it is the root, or is meritorious, but because it lays hold of Christ, for whose sake we are accepted."‡ The words of Luther to Brentz concur in satisfying us that this is the doctrine meant to be set forth by the Reformers:—"In order that I may have a better view of this thing, I am wont to think of myself as having in my heart no such quality

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\* Form. Con.

† Apol., Art. IV.

‡ Ideo sola fide sumus justi, non quia radix, ut tu scribis, sed quia apprehendit Christum, propter quem sumus accepti. Corp. Ref., II, 501.

as faith or love : but in place of these, I put Christ himself, and say, ' This is my righteousness.' " \*

6. In the nature of saving faith, is included, finally, an energy of spiritual transformation and fruitfulness. Though carefully distinguishing between justification and the spiritual change with which it is connected, our doctrine unequivocally asserts, that no other faith becomes the instrument of justification than a living and transforming one. It fully includes the truth of St. James, " Faith without works is dead." It is no real and living recipient. Though the holiness and works wrought by faith have no merit, and are not to be mistaken as forming any part of the ground of justification, yet the faith that does really embrace Christ, does, and must work by love and purify the heart. " We speak of faith," says the Apology, " as being not an idle fancy, but a new light, life, and power in the heart, that renews the heart and disposition, transforms man into a new creature." " Faith wherever, and while it exists, bears good fruit." " Love and works must follow faith." These are its evidences and seals. They prove its presence, reality and power, as springing grain and blooming flowers prove the presence and power of spring.

But as the connection of faith with good works forms the special subject of Art. XX, no further discussion of it is here needed, than this simple statement of the kind of faith referred to by our Confession in the doctrine of this Article.

We have thus recalled the teaching of this Article on the great subject which it sets forth. Together with an utter repudiation of the destructive error of Rome, it declares, in brief, but bold outline, the true doctrine of the Gospel and of our Church. It presents the *Source* of Justification wholly in the free grace of God. It asserts the only *Ground* of it to be found in the work of Jesus Christ, who, as the Godman, taking the sinner's place, by his vicarious obedience and suffering, made satisfaction to justice and violated law, and brought in, for the guilty, a perfect and everlasting righteousness. The *Nature* of it is not that of an internal change, but a forensic or governmental absolution of the punishment due to sin, together with an imputation of Christ's finished righteousness. This pardon and imputation are conditioned solely in a hearty reception of Christ, in

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\* Neander, Hist. Dog., p. 663.



a faith which is itself the gift of God, not meritorious, but living and transforming. And thus pardoned and accepted for Christ's sake in *justification*, the same faith to which all this is graciously given, takes Christ also for *sanctification*, in which, as a divine internal operation, generically distinct from the forensic act of justification, the forgiven sinner becomes a new creature in Christ, and is made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

It only remains now, in conclusion, to note, briefly, the harmony of other Confessions and orthodox Churches in the essential features of this doctrine, with their variations and differences from it in some of its aspects; and especially, to trace how absolutely and sharply it cuts off from itself and rejects the various errors of heterodox sects.

This is one of the great doctrines in which the Protestant Churches are essentially agreed. The Augsburg Confession, in accordance with the grand design of Luther, Melancthon, and their co-laborers, was meant to set forth the broad, clear, and full doctrines of the Gospel in their true catholicity. The Augsburg Confession concludes with this assurance of its own design, "That it might be clearly perceived, that by us nothing is received, either in doctrine or ceremonies, which might be contrary to the Holy Scriptures, or opposed to the universal Church." The denominational idea was unknown to them; and in declaring the truth of the Gospel, they designed the reformation of the aggregate church, and its restoration, in its universality, to its old foundations. Whilst, therefore, from its honorable priority, our Church, in its great Confession, took no denominational position, and gave itself no denominational marks and peculiarities, others co-laboring in the general reformatory aim, but, as we conceive, on narrower ground, framed for themselves more exclusive creeds and defined their position in denominational separation from the Augustana. It is to be regretted, that subsequently, a part of our Church, forsaking its original conception of embodying only the fundamental truths of revived universal Christianity, and accepting the partisan or denominational idea, sought in the Form of Concord to narrow our confessional basis, and define and restrict it in partisan and non-fundamental limitations. Yet the different denominations that separated by distinctive confessional tenets from the general Confession at Augsburg, have accepted, with hardly a variation, the great and central doctrine of this Article.



This happy agreement is made manifest by an examination of some of the principal confessions of the different Reformed or Calvinistic Churches, which took a doctrinal position denominationally distinct from the Church of the Augsburg Confession.

The *Confession of Basle*, 1547, Art. IX, declares, "We acknowledge the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ, the crucified One. Though this faith continually exercises, and manifests itself, by works of love, we do not ascribe righteousness and satisfaction for our sins to these works which are fruits of faith, but solely to true confidence and faith in the shed blood of the Lamb of God."\*

The *Gallican Confession*, adopted by the Reformed Church in France, 1559, Art. XVIII, says, "We rely upon the obedience of Christ alone, which is imputed to us, so that all our sins are covered, and we attain favor before God. Art. XX, "We believe that we become partakers of Christ's righteousness by faith alone \* \* \* and this occurs in such a way that the promises of life offered to us in Him (Christ) are then applied to our use, and rendered efficacious to us, when we embrace them, not doubting that those things will be fulfilled to us, of which we have been assured by the mouth of God."†

In the *Palatine, or Heidelberg Catechism*, 1563, probably the most important of all the Reformed Confessions, Question 60, "How art thou justified before God?" is answered: "Only by a true faith in Jesus Christ; so that though my conscience accuse me that I have grossly transgressed all the commands of God, and kept none of them, and am still inclined to all evil, notwithstanding God, without any merit of mine, but only of mere grace, grants and imputes to me

\* *Confitemur remissionem peccatorum per fidem in Jesum Christum crucifixum. Et quamvis hæc Fides per opera charitatis, se sine intermissione exercet, exerit, atque ita probatur: attamen justitiam et satisfactionem pro peccatis nostris, non tribuimus operibus, quæ Fidei fructus sunt; sed tantum veræ fiduciæ et fidei, in effusum sanguinem Agni Dei.*—Quoted from Niemeyer, *Coll. Confess. Ref.*, p. 98.

† Art. XVIII., *In sola Christi obedientia prorsus acquiescimus, quæ quidem nobis imputantur, tum et tegantur omnia nostra peccato, tum etiam ut gratiam coram Deo nanciscamur. Art. XX., Credimus, nos sola fide fieri justitiæ participes: \* \* \* hoc autem ideo fit, quod promissiones vitæ nobis in ipso (Christo) oblatæ tunc usui nostro applicantur et nobis redduntur efficaces, cum eas amplectimur, nihil ambigentes nobis obventura, de quibus ore Dei certiores fimus.*—Quoted from Winer, *Dartstel. des Lehrbegriffs*, pp. 96, 99.

the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ; even so, as if I never had had, nor committed any sin; yea, as if I had fully accomplished all that obedience which Christ hath accomplished for me; inasmuch as I embrace such benefit with a believing heart."\*

In its definition of Faith, it declares, "It is not only a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in His word, but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the Gospel in my heart; that not only to others but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits."

*The Second Helvetic Confession*, 1566, declares: "To justify is to remit sins, absolve from guilt and punishment, to receive into favor and declare righteous. \* \* \* For Christ having taken the sins of the world upon himself, made satisfaction for them to divine justice. Therefore on account of Christ alone, who suffered and rose, God is merciful to our unrighteousness, and does not impute our sins unto us, but imputes to us the righteousness of Christ. \* \* \* But since we receive this justification, not through any works, but through faith in Christ and the mercy of God, so we teach and believe with the Apostle, that the sinner is justified by faith alone in Christ, not by the law or by any works; \* \* because faith receives Christ as our righteousness, and attributes all things to the grace of God in Christ, so that justification is attributed to faith, altogether on account of Christ, and not as our own work. For it is the gift of God."†

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- \* Sola fide Iesum Christum, adeo ut licet mea me conscientia accuset, quod adversus omnia mandata Dei graviter peccaverim, nec ullum eorum servaverim, adhuc etiamnum ad omne malum propensus sim, nihilominus tamen (modo hæc beneficia vera animi fiducia amplectar), sine ullo meo merito, ex mera Dei misericordia, mihi perfecta satisfactio, justitia et sanctitas Christi, imputetur ac donetur; perinde ac si nec ullum ipse peccatum admissem, nec ulla mihi labe inhæreret; imo vero quasi eam obedientiam, quam pro me Christus præstitit, ipse perfecte præstitissem.—From Niemyer, Coll. Conf. Ref.

† Justificare significat Apostolo in disputatione de justificatione, peccata remittere, a culpa et pœna absolvere, in gratiam recipere, et justum pronunciare. \* \* \* Etenim Christus peccata mundi in se recepit et sustulit, divinæque justitiæ satisfecit. Deus ergo propter solum Christum passum et resuscitatum, propitius est peccatis nostris nec illa nobis imputat, imputat autem justitiam Christo pro nostra. \* \* Quoniam vero nos justificationem hanc recepimus,

In the *Thirty-Nine Articles* of the Church of England, 1562, the definition of Justification, according to Dr. Short,\* was probably derived from Melancthon's *Loci Communes*, and thus closely harmonizes with the Augustana, in the declaration: "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works and deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort."

The *Westminster Confession*, 1647, Chap. XI, puts the doctrine into minute specifications: "Those whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous: not for any work wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone: not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is alone the instrument of justification; yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love."

This doctrine is expressed in similar terms in the *First Helvetic Confession*, 1536, the *Consensus Tigurinus*, 1549, the *Genevan Catechism*, 1545, the *Belgic Confession*, 1562, the *Bohemian*, 1535, the *Remonstrant*, and other Confessions. They all agree in representing justification, over against the teaching of Rome, as a divine act, forensic in its character, based alone on the work and merit of Christ, through a true faith that apprehends and appropriates his vicarious obedience unto death, attended with renewal and good works, which, without forming in us the least merit, yet become the needed witness of the reality and power of the saving faith. This

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non per ulla opera, sed per fidem in dei misericordiam et Christum, ideo docemus et credimus cum Apostolo, hominem peccatorem justificare sola fide in Christum, non lege, aut ullis operibus: quia fides Christum justitiam nostram recepit et gratiæ Dei in Christo omnia tribuit, ideo fidei tribuitur justificatio, maxime propter Christum, et non ideo, quia nostrum opus est. Donum enim Dei est.—Niemyer, Coll. Conf., p. 494.

\* Hist. Ch. of Eng., Chap. VI.

great heart-doctrine of the Reformation, in which revived Christianity re-asserted itself, has, therefore, flowed out, in its essential forms, from the great Confession at Augsburg, and become the inheritance of all orthodox Protestantism.

It must be noted, however, as necessary to a true and full view of this point, that though the article of justification, in its separate form, is thus found to agree in these various creeds, yet placed in the midst of a low Arminian theory on the one hand, or of the rigid Calvinistic system on the other, the doctrine has a somewhat different significance and import. It stands in the midst of different relations, and becomes theologically modified by its bearings as viewed from a new stand-point. Thus Arminianism, with its semi-naturalism and undue exaltation of human ability, diminishes the divine grace of the act of justification, under self-complacent and unscriptural notions of working out our own salvation. And in the scheme of an absolute Predestination, justification by faith, instead of being central in the economy of salvation, is forced into a merely subordinate place. It does not present the pivoting point on which a sinner's free and gracious salvation really turns, or where God's grace meeting human freedom, personal salvation is determined in the issue. It is not, as it is in the Lutheran theology, the presentation of an open door, where there is entrance provided and offered to a world of perishing men, redeemed by Jesus' blood; but it is simply a fixed and subordinate divine act, carrying out a particular divine decree of grace to the individual. The decree of predestination meets us at the outset, settling, at the very beginning, the final destiny of the elect person. From this *decree* everything takes start, by it everything is shaped and has its significance. Personal salvation stands, from the first, in the pronounced fiat of a Sovereign Will. The hidden decree has fixed everything; and the incarnation and death of Christ for the elect alone, the Gospel call, irresistible grace, justification and sanctification, come in simply as carrying out the decisive decree.\* Hence, the Westminster Confes-

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\* In confirmation of this statement, see Dr. A. A. Hodge, on *The Atonement*, p. 389: "The entire analogy and spirit of Calvin's system was, as a whole, broadly characterized by the subjection of Redemption to Election as a means to an end. The able, learned and impartial F. Christian Baur, in his *History of the Atonement* (A. D., 1838), says: 'Zwingli and Calvin did indeed adhere to the dogma of Satisfaction in its traditional form; but from their



sion, with the rigorous logic that bends all parts into the harmony of the system, adds to the part already quoted on this subject, "God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; and Christ did, in the fullness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification: nevertheless they are not justified until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them." The offer of the Gospel, therefore, is not thus a presentation of an open privilege through justification, in which their salvation may be decided, as the point where divine grace comes to human freedom, in a mysterious but real opportunity whose issue determines the question of personal salvation or ruin. It is simply an included step in the sinner's already settled way to heaven. For it is to be remembered that the divine decrees, in this system, refer primarily not to any gift of grace to be offered to the sinner's acceptance in Christ, but to the final destiny itself. Leaping over all the intermediate space, they decide the end itself. In this, we conceive, the Gospel offer of free justification loses its significance as presenting the deciding point in the matter of salvation. In the Scriptural predestination, as it appears to us to be correctly taught by our Church—"elect according to foreknowledge"—"Whom He did foreknow, He did also predestinate," in which the divine decree is conditioned in foreknowledge, and not foreknowledge on the decree—justification by faith is the point where a redeemed race may come and realize forgiveness and salvation. But in the Calvinistic system, it presents no such free privilege save to the elect, and even in their case it is a point that *decides* nothing. The decision was fixed before, and this is only a stadium on the way. The Article of justification is shorn of its grand importance and its decisive relation. It is no longer the characterizing doctrine of the scheme of grace.

But in the doctrine of this Article, it is seen how rigorously and fully our Church bears testimony against all the *heresies* that have appeared on this subject in the history of Christianity. Its clear and decisive teaching cuts them all off in the sharpest rejection. It

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point of view, the Satisfaction itself was subsumed under the idea of the absolute decree, in relation to which the satisfaction of Christ was not the *causa meritoria* of salvation, but only the *causa instrumentalis* carrying out the purpose of redemption.' That this is true, so far as it represents Calvin subordinating the purpose of redemption to the purpose of election, every student of his *Institutes* and of his *Consensus Genevensis* knows."



has already appeared how the deadly errors of Rome have been excluded. The *Symbol of the Greek Church* gives no definition of the doctrine.\* According to *Kirpinski*, however, the form of justification is made to consist in the forgiveness of sins, and a *change of the heart to holiness*. This constitutes it, in part, internal and transitive, and involves the very root of all the rejected Romish errors.

The error of the *Anabaptists*, who, in accordance with their fanatical subjective system, made justification an inward change to purity, is witnessed against in this Article.

The same is true of the *Schwenkfeldian* view, which taught that the righteousness of faith is not to be thought of as something existing without us in Christ, but as really implanted with Christ in our hearts and souls, through faith, so that it dwells in us, and we are thereby inwardly renewed.

The teaching of *Osiander*, who, starting with Luther's frequent statement, that faith becomes the medium of the real indwelling of Christ, maintained that the righteousness of Christ thus passes into the inner life of the believer, who is thus justified, not by the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness, but by a real *communication* of it, is excluded by the doctrine of our Church.

The *Socinians* rightly regarded justification as a legal transaction, and, as to its objective character, maintained the Evangelical view; but by their rejection of the doctrine of a vicarious sacrifice, they have left no ground for any pardon and justification, and this truth becomes untruth in their system.

The *Mennonites*† and the *Quakers*‡ both have fallen into the common error of heresy, placing justification in the work wrought within the believer, and confounding it with renewal and sanctification. As is well illustrated in the history of these sects, nothing can save any system embodying such an error at its very heart from degenerating into multiform incongruities and distortions.

It is thus apparent that every form of false and destructive teaching on this subject includes one or more of the following errors: I. Rejection of the vicarious atonement and obedience of Christ, as in Arian or Unitarian theologies, leaving no divine or possible ground

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\* See Winer, *Darstellung des Lehrbegriffs*, p. 95.

† Reis, *Conf. Art. XXI.* (Winer, p. 96).

‡ Barclay, *Apol.*, vii. 3, p. 128.

of justification; 2. Pelagian exaltation of human ability, and reliance on human strength and works; 3. Denial of the purely forensic character of justification; 4. Making its nature consist in an internal change, according to some modification of the idea of an indwelling righteousness, thus confounding it with sanctification, and shutting out the penitent sinner from any hope of acceptance, save on the ground, or in view of, the holy life wrought within him.

Our Confession, however, maintains the positive truths that stand opposed to each and all of these errors, and insists on the central position and characterizing nature of justification by faith in the gospel of salvation. We rejoice in the historical priority and pre-eminence which Providence has given our Church in recovering this doctrine, in its purity and power, to Christendom from under the perversions of the Romish apostasy, and setting it forth again as showing the open way of salvation to a perishing world. We are glad of this great heritage. And we know of no more fitting language with which to conclude this discussion than the ringing words of Luther in the Smalcald Articles: "Upon this Article depends all that we teach and do against the pope, the devil, and the world." "Whatever may happen, though heaven and earth should fall, nothing in this article can be rescinded or repealed." Part II., Art. I.

# ARTICLE V.

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## THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY.

BY C. A. HAY, D. D.

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THE venerable Confession of our Church does not profess to be a systematically arranged body of Christian doctrine; and yet even the casual reader will not fail to observe that the topics, briefly discussed in its successive Articles, are not taken up merely at random, but that they seem to follow one another in a simple, natural order.

The Confessors begin with what naturally suggests itself as the fundamental article of all religious belief, viz.: The doctrine concerning God, his nature, works, etc.

Then follows the article concerning *Man* in his fallen and helpless condition, alienated from God by wicked works.

The third naturally follows, viz.: The doctrine concerning the *Mediator* between God and man, the *Divine Author of reconciliation*.

The fourth presents *the sole condition of reconciliation, Faith in Christ*.

And, next in order, they present the doctrine of the *Gospel Ministry*, as the *divinely appointed agency for bringing men into this state of reconciliation with God*.

To some reflections upon the Article last mentioned, we respectfully invite your attention.

A wide and tempting field here opens before us—the gospel ministry! Theme, worthy the pen of an angel—office, highest of all

upon earth; with duties, prerogatives, responsibilities, trials, encouragements, rewards, all linking it with the life of its Divine Author, and reaching over into eternity.

We are admonished, at the outset, however, by various considerations, to limit our remarks to but a few of the aspects of this great theme. Chief among these considerations is the fact, that some of the topics casually alluded to in the Article before us, are treated of *ex professo* in other parts of the Confession, and courtesy toward those who have preceded, and are to follow us, demands that we do not enlarge upon these. Besides, the main subject of the Article, viz.: *The Origin and Nature of the Gospel Ministry, with its Relation to the Church*, has of late been attracting special attention, and it has been deemed best, therefore, to confine the present discussions chiefly to these aspects of the theme.

We present, in the first place, a literal translation of the Article, as we have it in the standard German text, as follows:

*"For the attainment of this faith, God has instituted the Office of the Ministry, has given the Gospel and the Sacraments, through which, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who produces faith, where and when he will, in those who hear the Gospel, which teaches that we have a merciful God through the merits of Christ, not through our own merits, if we believe this.*

*"And the Anabaptists and others are condemned, who teach that we obtain the Holy Spirit without the external word of the Gospel, by our own preparation, thoughts and works."*

We append, also, the text of the Article as preserved in the original German of Melancthon, and in the cotemporaneous Latin copy. The slight variation between them in the statement of the main topic of the Article, does not seriously affect the sense. Whilst the Latin intones the *means* by which the incumbent of the office is to accomplish its design, the German gives greater prominence to the fact that the office comes directly from God. No one can, however, for a moment suspect, that the Latin does not just as clearly *imply* the *divine origin* of the office, as the German copy *expresses* it.\*

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\*The original German copy presents the Article thus:

Solchen glauben zu erlangen, *hat Gott das predigamt* (typographical error in original, for *predigamt*) *ein gesetzet Evangelium und Sacramenta geben*, dadurch, als durch mittel der heilig geist wirckt, und die Herten tröst und glauben gibt, wo und wenn er wil, inn denen, so das Evangelium hören, welches lehret, das wir,

As in the preceding Article, the fundamental *doctrinal* error of Rome was effectually neutralized by the quiet, unimpassioned exhibition of the Scriptural doctrine of *Justification by Faith alone*—so in this Article, as by a smooth stone from the brook, the giant *practical* heresy of the hierarchy is smitten in the forehead by the simple annunciation of *the Scriptural theory of the Holy Ministry*. And we cannot but admire the calm and quiet style in which this thorough work is done. There is no denunciation of that monstrous iniquity, the hierarchical antichrist, under whose heel the church was groaning. Still less is there a phrenzied rushing to the other extreme of rejecting all ecclesiastical order and authority. But, with a spirit of profound submission to the truth, and of sublime confidence in its power to overthrow all error, there comes forth the simple statement, that God [desiring to reconcile to himself the sinful race of man, and having, in pursuance of this gracious purpose, carried forward the wondrous plan of redemption even unto the sacrifice of his only begotten Son thereupon] *appointed and designated a special agency, namely, the Ministry of Reconciliation, operating through the Word and the Sacraments, whereby he would ordinarily, in all coming time, apply to the hearts of men, with gracious and sovereign efficacy, upon the sole condition of faith upon their part, all the benefits of this atonement.*

The Confessors, in this statement, must be understood as having in view, on the one hand, the teachings of the Scriptures on this subject, and, on the other, the unscriptural and therefore unwarrantable claims of the papacy to all manner of dignities and prerogatives as connected with the ministerial office. The Article was

durch Christus verdienst ein gnedigen Gott haben, so wir solchs glauben. Und werden verdammet die Widderteuffer, und andere, so leren, das wir ohne das leibliche wort des Evangelii, den heiligen geist durch eigene bereitung und werck verdienen.

The original Latin copy presents the Article thus :

Ut hanc fidem consequamur *institutum est ministerium docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta*. Nam per verbum et sacramenta tanquam per instrumenta donatur Spiritus Sanctus, qui fidem efficit, ubi et quando visum est Deo, in iis, qui audiunt Evangelium, scilicet quod Deus, non propter nostra merita sed propter Christum, justificet hos, qui credunt se propter Christum in gratiam recepi.

Damnant Anabaptistas et alios, qui sentiunt Spiritum Sanctum contingere sine verbo externo hominibus per ipsorum preparationes et opera.



equivalent to a solemn protest, on the part of the Confessors, against all else as connected with the Gospel Ministry, except the simple preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. These are declared to be all sufficient under the sovereign sway of the Holy Spirit to accomplish both the justification and the sanctification of the sincere believer. Silently, impliedly, but none the less decidedly, are herewith rebuked all claims on the part of a self-perpetuating, hierarchical, spiritual judiciary, that assumed to forgive sin by virtue of official authority vested in it. Equally decided on the other hand is the specific protest against that false and fanatical spirituality that treats with neglect and contempt the outward Word of God, whilst relying upon its own inward preparation, thoughts and works. To nothing else, say the Confessors, is the reconciliation of the sinner with God to be ascribed, but to the blood of the atonement applied by the Holy Spirit, at his own good pleasure, to the hearts of all who truly believe.

We may well imagine how unwelcome such simple Scriptural statements as these must have been to the imperious ecclesiastical tyrants before whom they were uttered. This Article, thus reiterating the cardinal doctrine asserted in the one immediately preceding it, viz., of Justification by Faith alone, and at the same time setting forth the office of the Ministry as existing only for the purpose of awakening and keeping alive this faith, must have been recognized at once as a wholesale condemnation of everything in which the existing priesthood chiefly gloried.

Nor did the question as to the origin, nature, prerogatives, etc., of the ministerial office assume essentially any other shape during the succeeding age, when the various doctrines of the Confession were being more fully developed. The issue still remained the same, viz.: On the one hand a simple, serving Gospel Ministry with the ordinary means of grace made effectual by the Holy Spirit to the conversion and salvation of men, and on the other a domineering, hierarchical caste, claiming special official prerogatives, and practically supplanting the divinely appointed means of grace by human inventions.

Upon this line the great battle of the Reformation was fought out, so far as this issue is concerned, and this now constitutes one of the strongest contrasts between Evangelical and Papal Christianity, each party adhering to the principles and practice, the lead-

ing features of which are indicated in this article: *the Lutheran Ministry*, simply the divinely appointed official agency for the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments, with faith as the sole condition of justification before God; and the Romish priesthood, with all its various grades, a grand, consolidated, self-perpetuating hierarchy, claiming to hold in its hands the keys of the kingdom of heaven, swaying an iron sceptre over the Church, imposing intolerable burdens of penance and bodily mortification, and demanding large pecuniary contributions as conditions *sine qua non* for procuring pardon for sin and reconciliation with God.

So far, then, as the attitude of the Confession towards the Papal Church is concerned, and, we may add, towards the Episcopal Church also (in so far as it clings to the unscriptural doctrine of a graded ministry, and specially consecrated ministerial order, perpetuated in the Church by an uninterrupted personal and official succession from the apostles)—so far as this aspect of the question is concerned, we leave it, with the simple statement we have made, as to the unvarying sameness of the issue, that we may turn to the consideration of certain topics intimately connected with the theme of this Article, that have been for some time past, and now are, agitating large portions of our Church, both in Europe and in this country.

Only upon two occasions, during the whole history of our Church, has the leading topic of this Article been the subject of serious controversy within our own communion. The first was consequent upon the glorious revival of the spirit of genuine Lutheranism, *i. e.*, of earnest Evangelical Christianity, in the days of Spener and Francke. The letter of the standards then remained intact, it is true, but in many respects their spirit had been practically ignored. Theoretically adhering to the principles of the Reformers, the Church practically yielded in some measure to the pressure of circumstances, and, under the undue influence of the temporal power, encroachments upon the inherent rights of the laity were submitted to, and even apologized for, that provoked a reactionary resistance, when the heart of the Church was stirred and the current set in against the lifeless orthodoxy of the age. Along with other living issues of that day was the question of the common priesthood of believers, the inherent right of the laity to expound the Scriptures and administer the Sacraments in time of need, and the right and the

duty of all believers to take an active part in the selection and appointment of the incumbents of the sacred office.\*

Somewhat similar is the origin of the controversy at present agitating a portion of our Church on this subject, and bidding fair to attract still greater attention.

The great revival of religion in our Churches upon the continent of Europe, consequent upon the devastating wars of Napoleon and the enthusiastic celebration of the ter-centenary of the Reformation, in 1817, led many, whose hearts were turned to the Lord, to give earnest heed also to the teachings of the great theologians of our Church; and the newly-awakened religious zeal and thirst for sound and wholesome religious instruction awakened in the hearts of multitudes of the people a just contempt for the heartless rationalism of those whom they were compelled to receive as their religious teachers. Finding themselves authorized, both by the Word of God and the standards of the Church, to exercise the right of choosing pastors for themselves, and unable, in conscience, to submit to the imposition of unworthy ministers, they resisted the "powers that be," and willingly endured the consequent persecution for the sake of Christ and a free Gospel. The issue, thus created, led at once to an earnest discussion of the great principles involved in it, calling forth some admirable dissertations, and provoking, unfortunately, a warm and even angry controversy, in which some of the leading theologians of Germany participated. Meanwhile, some of those of whom we have spoken as persecuted for conscience sake, emigrating to this country, found here free scope for the exercise of all their religious rights, and one would naturally expect that, so far as they are concerned, the agitation upon this question would cease. And this would probably have been the case, had they not been harshly called to account for their opinions and practices in this matter by some of their countrymen of more conservative views. In consequence of this, a controversy has arisen that has unfortunately been conducted in a spirit far from creditable to either party.

It would be difficult to account for the vehemence and acrimony exhibited in this controversy, were it not for the fact that the respective parties believe that they see lurking in the statements of

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\* See some account of this controversy between Spener, Freylinghausen, Frohn, Eilmar, Köpe and others, in Walch's *Religions-Streitigkeiten*, I, 562 sq., 814 sq., II., 492, etc.

their opponents the embryos of dangerous heresies; and so they feel called upon, respectively, not merely to dispute one another's avowed opinions, but also what seem to be erroneous tendencies likely to be developed by them.

Whilst we cannot but regret the unbecoming temper in which this discussion has, especially of late, been conducted, we cannot refrain from expressing our gratitude to the respective combatants for the industry and zeal with which they have sifted out of the huge mass of our early Church literature and placed within our easy reach everything that bears upon this question, each party seeking to entrench itself behind ecclesiastical authority, and each in fact finding what it claims to be a vindication of its views in the public standards of the Church and in the writings of our soundest theologians.\*

The parties in this controversy may be characterized as the democratic-republican on the one hand, and the aristocratic-conservative upon the other. Of these, the former represents the radical revolutionary element of the Reformation period, with its downright and outspoken antagonism to the hierarchy of the age; whilst the latter exhibits rather the spirit and reflects the views of a later era, when, in a more settled state of affairs, the opinions and practice of the Church had fallen back somewhat from the more pronounced position of the radical Reformers. The former, starting out with the assertion of the right of all believers to choose and ordain their own religious teachers, were driven in the heat of controversy to such assertions concerning the constant actual right of all Christians personally to administer the functions of the ministerial office, as led their opponents to charge them with low and agrarian views of the sacred ministry, that rob it of all dignity and authority. The latter, seeming to insist upon the self-perpetuating character of the ministry, are charged by their opponents with a Rome-ward tendency, as though they made the Church the child of the Ministry and dependent upon a hierarchical caste.†

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\* Our special acknowledgments are due to Doctors Walther and Höfling for many of the extracts from our older theologians of which we avail ourselves in this article.

† Among those of the former class, who have taken part in this controversy, we may mention Höfling (*Grundsätze evangelisch-lutherischer Kirchenverfassung*, Erlangen, 1853), Harless (*Kirche und Amt nach lutherischer Lehre*;



Now it seems strange that among those who claim to hold with equal tenacity not only to the Scriptures but also to the Confessions of our Church there should be such widely different views upon a subject so clearly stated in the standards and so abundantly illustrated in the writings of our leading theologians. Surely this should teach these controversialists to regard with greater charity their brethren in the faith, who agreeing with them so cordially on all the great leading issues of the Reformation period, conscientiously differ from them upon some topics of far less importance than those here in dispute.

Let us now turn to the original documents, and endeavor to ascertain from them *what the Confessors understood to be the Source and the Prerogatives of the Gospel Ministry, and its Relation to the Church as a whole.*

In endeavoring to fix with precision the meaning they attached to the terms Priesthood, Office, Call, Keys, etc., we are unfortunately met at the threshold, with the fact that the Reformers (and, among them all, especially Luther), employed these expressions often in a vague and variable sense, rendering their utterances, at different times, more or less inconsistent, thus affording an opportunity for those, who differ from one another in their views upon this subject, from both sides to appeal to them for sanction and authority. Hence it has resulted that the present controversy is to a great extent a mere logomachy. If these and kindred terms were precisely defined and the respective parties would agree to use them *in the same sense*, more carefully noting the varying phases of thought expressed by them at different times, by the same early writers, those who now so bitterly denounce each other would probably be found, after all, not to be so very wide apart.

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Stuttgart, 1853); Walther (Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt, Erlangen, 1852; the same writer in the Lutheraner of 1860, etc.); Loy, in the Evangelical Review, 1861, 1864; Eirich, ditto, 1860; Fink, ditto, 1861; Fritschel, S. F., in Brobst's Theologische Monatshefte, 1869.

Of those advocating the later, more conservative views, which have generally prevailed in our Church, both in Europe and this country, we call attention to Löhe (Aphorismen ueber die neutestamentlichen Aemter und ihr Verhaeltniss zur Gemeinde, Erlangen, 1849; also Kirche und Amt—Neue Aphorismen, Erlangen, 1851); Grabau, in the Pastoral-briefe of the Buffalo Synod and in the Informatorium; Worley, in the Evangelical Review, 1860; Hinterleitner, in Brobst's Theologische Monatshefte, 1869; Mohldenke, ditto, 1870; Münchmeyer, Guericke, Thomasius, Kahn, Delitzsch, Kliefoth, etc.



Fortunately, on the other hand, we are not confined to the Confession itself in our search after the precise views of the Confessors upon this subject. Not only are we justified, upon general grounds, in appealing to the other writings published by those who are mainly responsible for the Confession itself, in illustration of their opinions, but these other writings are directly referred to in the standards as rendering a fuller statement upon these subjects unnecessary.

At the same time, we should not forget to make due allowance also, in interpreting the *Augustana*, for the unmistakable influence of the mild and gentle, and we may add the conservative and conciliatory, spirit of Melancthon in imparting to it an irenic character that it assuredly would not have borne had the true master-spirit of the Reformation given it its final shape and form. "*Ich hätte nicht so leise treten können*," was Luther's characteristic remark when he first read it, leaving us to infer that he would have planted his foot down more firmly, in more than one place, and that we should then have had a more radical and thoroughly outspoken anti-Romish document, as the great standard Confession of Protestantism, than we now have.

I. *The Gospel Ministry*, say the Confessors, *is a divinely appointed office*. This is so distinctly stated in the Article itself, "*God has instituted the office of the Ministry*," that it hardly seems necessary to look elsewhere in the other writings of its authors, for a confirmation of this statement.

Now, whilst the office of religious teacher would probably have arisen in the Christian Church even without any special divine appointment, as a practical necessity, just as we find that something analogous to it has existed among all heathen nations, yet we are not left to account for its origin in the Church upon any such grounds. As our Confessors here teach, it was directly introduced, and ordered to be perpetuated, by the Lord himself. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, etc. 2 Cor. v. 18, He hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation. Eph. iv. 11, And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. Jno. xx. 21, As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

It may be satisfactory, nevertheless, to hear a few of the utterances of the Reformers upon this subject, and their echo in the writings of some of our leading theologians.

*Luther*, in 1522, Walch. xix, 1334.

"Paul says to his disciple Titus, i. 5-7, For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee, etc. Whoever believes that here the Spirit of Christ is speaking and commanding through Paul, he must acknowledge that *this is a divine appointment and arrangement*, that in every city there must be many bishops, or at least one."

*Luther*, in the Smalcald Articles, 1537.

"The office of the Ministry is consequent upon the calling of the apostles."

*Luther*, in 1530, Walch. x, 488.

"I hope indeed that believers, and those who wish to be called Christians, know very well that *the Ministry has been appointed and established by God*, not with gold and silver, but with the precious blood and bitter death of his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ."

The term *appointed* (*ingesetzt, institutum est*), which the Confessors here use in regard to the Ministry, is employed by them also in regard to human government (Art. XVI), and they plainly understand the relation to be the same in both cases. That there shall be some form of government among men, God has determined; what precise shape it shall assume, he has not definitely prescribed. That this authority, when exercising its functions justly and righteously, is to be obeyed, he has commanded, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God," Rom. xiii. 1. So also, in the Church, with the Gospel Ministry. "Obey them that have the rule over you, who watch for your souls as they that must give an account."

*Melanchthon*, in the Apology, xiii, 11.

"The Ministry of the Gospel has *the command of God*, and has magnificent promises, Rom. i. 16; Is. lv. 11."

*Melanchthon*, in the Apology, xiv, 12.

"The Church *is commanded* to appoint ministers, which ought to be most gratifying to us, because we know that God approves that Ministry and is present with it."

*Gerhard*, *Loc. de Minist. Eccl.*, §§ 3 & 49.

"The necessity of the ministerial office depends upon *the divine appointment*, for it has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, 1 Cor. i. 21, etc."

*"The original efficient cause of the Gospel Ministry is the one and only true God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, which is proved: 1. By the express declarations of the Scriptures, Ps. lxxviii. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 28; 2 Cor. v. 18., God hath given to us apostles and other teachers of the Church, the ministry of reconciliation. 2. By the liberal promises of God, that he would give pastors to his Church and would perpetuate the office of preaching, Jer. iii. 15; xxiii. 4., And I will set up shepherds over them (cause to stand, appoint) which shall feed them, Joel ii. 23. 3. By the peculiar titles of God, which prove that the appointment and preservation of the ministerial office belongs to him, Matt. ix. 38., etc."*

*Chemnitz, Exam. xii, de Sacr. Ord. p., 579.*

*"That the office of the Word and the Sacraments was instituted by the Son of God also in the New Testament cannot be doubted. The Church has also the command to call and appoint servants, and 1. The promise is added that God will approve the appointment of those who are called by the voice of the Church and set apart for this office. Thus Paul says, Acts xx. 28, that those who are called mediately are appointed by the Holy Ghost to feed the flock of God. And in Eph. iv. 11, it is written that the Son of God grants as his gifts not only apostles but also pastors and teachers, who are called mediately. 2. The promise is added that God will grant his grace and gifts, so that those who are legitimately called may, by the use of the same, rightly, faithfully and savingly accomplish what is designed by the sacred office; John xx. 23; Matt. xxviii. 20; 1 Tim. iv. 14, etc. 3. This promise also is added, that God will be with the office, will bless the planting and watering and make them successful, will effectually work through the office, calling, enlightening, converting, granting repentance, faith, regeneration, reformation, and in short, accomplishing through the office the entire work of salvation. Matt. xxviii. 20; John xx. 23; Matt. xvi. 19; 2 Cor. iii. 6, etc."*

As we have already intimated, the Confessors held that

II. The *chief design and special duty of the Ministerial Office* is the *preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the Sacraments, and the exercise of Church discipline.*

Whilst in the Article before us, only the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments are mentioned, the third duty we have here added is throughout implied, as it is generally

expressly mentioned, by the Confessors and all the early theologians, when describing the functions of the Ministerial Office. This will abundantly appear in what follows; and we only add here, to avoid misapprehension, that we are never to understand the Confessors when using the phrase, "*forgive and retain sin*," as employing it in a Romish sense. For it will be recollected that the Reformation had its very birth in Luther's thundering theses against the blasphemous presumption of that abomination of the Papacy.

*Augsburg Confession*, Abuses Corrected, vii., 5.

"Our Churches hold, that the power of the Keys, or the power of the bishops according to the Gospel, is the authorization or command of God to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sin, and administer the Sacraments. For with this command Christ sent forth the Apostles, John xx. 21; Mark xvi. 15. *This power is exercised in teaching or preaching the Word, and administering the Sacraments, to many or few according to the call*, because not corporeal but eternal things are dispensed, eternal justice, the Holy Spirit, eternal life; and these things could not be done except through the ministration of the Word and the Sacraments."

*Smalcald Articles*; Appendix.

"In our Apology we have in general described what is the nature of ecclesiastical authority. For the Gospel commands all who are placed over the Churches that they preach the Gospel, forgive sins, and administer the Sacraments; and besides this it gives to them such jurisdiction that they are to excommunicate those who continue in open vice, and to release and absolve those who wish to reform. Now all must confess, even our opponents, that all who are set over the Churches, have this command alike, whether they be called Pastors, or Presbyters, or Bishops."

III. *The Ministry is no self-perpetuating caste or order, with rights and duties intrinsically different from those of all other believers; for all true believers are spiritual priests and are capable of performing all the functions of the ministerial office, if called thereto, or, in case of special necessity, even without a regular call.*

Surely those altogether misunderstand the Confessors who suppose that they meant by this Article to teach that God, when he appointed the *Ministerial Office*, gave to it the Gospel and the Sacraments and the Keys in such a sense as that, by possessing the sole and exclusive right to administer the same, they should constitute a



superior rank in the Church, and hand down these prerogatives to their successors in office. They not only do not imply this, but they elsewhere distinctly assert the contrary, viz.: That God gave the Gospel, and the Sacraments, and the power of the Keys besides, to all the Church, to the whole body of believers. It would be strange, indeed, if those just emerging from the thralldom of the hierarchy, and in the very act of protesting against its enormous assumptions in this direction, should so stultify themselves as practically to give back into the hands of an official, self-perpetuating caste, the very weapons with which the Church had so long been held in subjection! No, they held that there is no such difference between the regularly called Ministry and the mass of the believers that the latter cannot perform any of the functions of the Ministerial Office in case of necessity. But this could not be the case if the mass of believers were not already possessed of the essential qualifications for the discharge of these official duties, and if the right of performing them, or of having them performed, were not originally vested in all the individual members of the Church.

*Luther*, in 1521, Walch. xix., 1340, 1341.

"It is enough that we know that a Christian people is not divided, but is without sects or respect of person, in which there is no layman, no clergy, no monk, no nun, absolutely no difference, all married or unmarried, as any one may choose. There is in reality no difference between the bishops, elders and priests and the laity, no one being distinguished from other Christians, *except that he has an office*, which is committed to him, to preach the Word of God and to administer the Sacraments; just as a mayor or judge is in no wise distinguished from the other citizens, except that the government of the city is entrusted to him. \* \* The name of bishop or priest is not the name of a *class*, but of an *office*; priest is the same as elder, and bishop the same as overseer. Yet wicked men have manufactured out of them *ranks* and special dignity."

*Luther*, in his Commentary on 1 Peter (in 1523), writes thus:

"Now these (Papists) have established *an order*, as though it were appointed by God, and have taken such liberties in the very midst of Christendom that there is a greater difference than between us and the Turks."

There is a twofold scriptural basis upon which the Confessors rest these opinions, viz.: *The common priesthood of believers and the power of the Keys.*



*Luther*, Exposition of 110th Psalm, in 1539.

“Do you ask, wherein consists the priesthood of believers, or what are their priestly works? Answer: The very same of which we have been speaking, namely, teaching, sacrificing and praying. If we have become Christians, \* \* then we have also received the right and the power to teach and confess the *Word* that He gives us before all, *every one according to his calling and place*. For, although we do not all occupy a public office and calling, yet every believer *may and should* teach, instruct, exhort, comfort, rebuke his neighbor through the Word of God, whenever and wherever that may be needed, as a father and mother, their children and household, one brother, or neighbor, citizen or farmer, the other.

That is what Luther means by private Christians *using the office*, viz.: Acting as priest in private capacity, not officiating in public.

*Luther*, in 1533, Winkelmesse, Walch. xix., 1536.

“We do not wish to be, or to be called, *made* but *born* priests, and our priesthood we claim as hereditary from our father and mother; for *our Father* is the true Pastor and High Priest, as is written in the 110th Psalm: God has sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. And that he has verified in that he offered himself for us upon the cross, etc. But this same Priest has a *Bride*, a priestess, as is written, John iii. 29, He that hath the bride is the bridegroom. Of this bridegroom and bride we are born through holy baptism, and so have become hereditarily true priests in Christendom, sanctified by his blood and consecrated by his Holy Spirit, as St. Peter calls us, 1 Peter ii. 5, Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices; and St. Paul, Rom. xii. 1, also calls us *priests*, for he exhorts us to “*present* our bodies as a living *sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God.” Now to sacrifice unto God is the office of the priest alone, as the pope himself must confess, and all the world beside. Moreover, we are not only his *children*, but also his *brothers*, as he says, Ps. xxii. 22, I will declare thy name unto my *brethren*; and Matt. xii. 50, He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, sister, brother. So that *we are priests by the double title of childhood and brotherhood*. This our connate and inherited priesthood we insist shall not be taken from us, or interfered with or eclipsed, but held prominently forth, proclaimed and abundantly honored, so that it may shine resplendently as the sun, and dazzle the eyes of the devil and his

abominable puppets, so that his sneaking masses and chrism, in contrast to it, shall stink worse than devil's-dung. Hence, the Holy Ghost in the New Testament has taken especial care that the name priest (*Sacerdos*) should not be applied to any apostle or to any other offices, but only to the baptized or Christians, as a connate, inherited name through baptism."

The point is much insisted upon by our earlier writers, that the term *priest*, which in the course of time came to carry with it so much of special prerogative, was the common appellation of all believers in the days of primitive Christianity.

*Joh. Gerhard*, Loc. de Min. Eccl., §§ 14, 15.

Augustine (de Civit. Dei, 10) says: "*Now* in the Church only the bishops and elders are called priests, but *all Christians were so called* in view of the mysterious anointing, because they are all members of one Priest." "The former signification (says Joh. Gerhard) is the *ecclesiastical* one, the latter is the one usually *employed in the Scriptures*. This is specially to be noted as against the Papists who seek to derive an argument in favor of the mass from the name priest as applied in the writings of the Church Fathers to the office-bearers of the New Testament."

*Luther*, Kirchenpostille, Walch., xii, 1889.

"They must confess [the Papists] that this typical priesthood, which existed under the Old Testament, exists no longer, and we ask them then, whence have they authority to say that they were typified by those priests, and that they alone are priests of the New Testament? There is not a letter in the whole New Testament in which they are called priests. What can they say to this? The lepers are to go to the priests; where are the priests? St. Peter, 1 Ep. ii. 9, says that in the New Testament there are no special priests, but that all *Christians* are priests, *typified by those priests*."

*Luther*, Sendschreiben Prag, 1523, Walch., x, 1834.

"For a priest, especially in the New Testament, must be *born*, not *made*; is not *consecrated*, but *created*; is not born, however, by a carnal birth, but by a spiritual birth through the Word and Spirit, in the washing of regeneration. So that all Christians are together priests, and all priests are Christians, *and it is a cursed abuse of language to say that a priest is anything else than a Christian*, for that is maintained in despite of the Word of God, only as a doctrine of men, or as a matter of tradition, or because many believe it. And

to make either of these three reasons the basis of a matter of faith, is blasphemous and abominable."

*Melanchthon*, in the Apology.

"Gabriel, among other reasons for withholding the cup from the laity, adds this also, that *there must be a difference between the priests and the laity*. And I suppose that is the principal reason why they now insist so much upon this, so as to give a greater air of holiness to the clergy in contrast with the laity. This is all a human contrivance; it is easy to see what is the drift of it."

*Heshusius*, Hauptartikel christl. Lehre, A. D. 1584, p. 785.

"All believers, not only those who are in the holy office, but also civil rulers and mechanics, who are baptized in the name of Christ and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, these are priests and priestesses, that are fully entitled to offer spiritual sacrifices. The Apostle Peter addresses not only preachers, bishops and pastors, but the whole Church of God, those who had received the Word of God and faith in Christ, these he calls the royal priesthood; therefore the pope with his bishops does wrong, in that he robs the Church of God of her title of honor, and appropriates this glorious name entirely to himself and his bald-headed crowd."

We have already remarked that some of the technical terms of this controversy were used by the Reformers and the early theologians of our Church *in a vague and variable manner*. This is particularly true of the term *Keys*. In its strict sense, of the "*power of binding and loosing*," they all employ it, but they often use it also in a much wider sense, as will be seen from a few quotations.

Art. XXVIII., of the Confession, defines the keys to be:

"An authority and command of God to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sin, and to dispense the Sacraments. This power of the keys we employ and exert only by *teaching and preaching the Word of God* and by administering the Sacrament to many or few persons, according as our call may be," etc.

*Melanchthon*, Smalcald Articles, Appendix.

"Just as the *promise of the Gospel* belongs immediately to the whole Church, so also do the keys belong immediately to the whole Church; since the *keys* are nothing else than *the office* through which that promise is imparted to every one who desires it."

*Luther*, in 1521, commenting upon Matt. xviii. 15-20, Büchlein von der Beichte, Erlangen Ed., 27, 363-4, says:

"O that this passage were not in the Gospel! What a fine thing that would be for the pope! For here Christ gives the keys to the whole Church and not to St. Peter. And here belongs also the same saying, Matt. xvi. 18, 19, where he gives the keys to Peter on behalf of the whole Church. For in this 18th chapter the Lord makes a gloss upon his own words, showing *to whom* he had previously (Matt. xvi.) given the keys, in the person of St. Peter. They are given to *all Christians*, and not to the person, St. Peter."

*Luther*, in 1523, Sendschr. Prag., Walch. x, 1846.

"The keys belong to the whole congregation of Christians *and to every one that is a member thereof*, and this not only so far as the possession of the power is concerned, but also as to its actual use in every way possible; so that we do no violence to the words of Christ, who says bluntly and to all alike: Let him be *unto thee* as a heathen man and a publican, Matt. xviii. 17. \* \* Also, 19, If two of you shall agree on earth; also v. 20, "*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*" Also "Whatsoever *ye* shall bind," etc. And here I would use in proof also that passage in which Christ addressed Peter alone: "*To thee* will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven." In which texts the most perfect authority and the exercise of it for binding and loosing are assured and confirmed most positively—unless, indeed, we would deny to Christ himself the power and use of the keys if he dwelt with the two or three."

*Luther*, in 1539, Schrift von Conciliis und Kirchen, Walch. xvi, 2791.

"The keys are not the pope's (as he falsely claims) but the Church's; that is, they belong to the people of Christ, the people of God, or the holy Christian people, all the world over, or where there are Christians. For they cannot all be at Rome, or the whole world would have to be there, which will not happen for some time to come. Just as Baptism, the Sacrament, God's Word, are not the pope's, but belong to the people of Christ, so the keys are and are called *claves ecclesiae*, not *claves papae*."

*Melanchthon*, Smalcald Articles, Append., 22 sq.

"And here they quote against us several texts, *e. g.*, Matt. xvi., Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church. Also, *To thee* will I give the keys. Also, Feed my sheep. And more of the same kind. But as this whole matter has been diligently and suffi-



ciently treated of by those of our side, we will not here repeat what they have written, but will now briefly reply as to what is the real meaning of those passages. *In all these texts Peter is a representative person*, and speaks not for himself alone, but for all the apostles. This the passages clearly prove, for Christ *always asks not Peter alone*, but says: Whom do ye say that I am? And, although he says in one place to *Peter alone*: To thee will I give the keys; and Whatsoever thou bindest, etc.; yet he says the very same in other places to *all the disciples*: Whatsoever ye shall bind, etc., Matt. xviii. Also in John: Whosoever sins ye remit, etc. These words prove that the keys were given to all alike, and that they all alike were sent forth to preach."

"But over and above all this, we are to confess that the keys belong and have been given not to one man alone, but to the *whole Church*, as this can be clearly and satisfactorily proven. *For just as the promise of the Gospel belongs to the whole Church, originally and immediately, so also do the keys belong to the whole Church immediately*, for the keys are nothing else than the office through which those promises are communicated to every one who desires them; it is evident, then, that the Church, in effect, has the power to appoint her ministers. And Christ, along with these words: Whatsoever ye shall bind, etc., clearly indicates *to whom* he has given the keys, namely, *to the whole Church*, when he says: Whosoever *two or three* are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

At this point we meet one of the principal topics now in controversy. In direct opposition to this last statement of Luther, in the Smalcald Articles, that the whole Church, and every member of it, has received the keys *originally and immediately*, the conservative party assert, in the words of Grabau: (Informatorium, second year, page 23), "The congregation [Church] has the keys *not immediately*, but mediately in the Word of God, and in the *holy office of the ministry*."

(First year, page 22:) "If it now be said that this special ecclesiastical authority is given by Christ to his *Church* upon earth, nothing more is intended than that it was instituted in the Gospel, and set up *in* the Church by ordinary *means* through the efficacy of the Gospel in the form of the *office of bishop or preacher*."

"In this house of God now there are the keys of Christ through



means of the Gospel *and the office of the ministry*, not because they have their origin there, but because that is the appropriate spiritual theatre where they can exhibit their power for the consolation and salvation of souls, and be thus *put to use*. And in this sense the Smalcald Articles say that the keys are given to the whole Church."

That our earlier theologians did not so understand the Smalcald Articles, but held this to be the Romish view of the Ministry, is apparent, *e. g.*, from Gerhard's statement: (Loc. Theol. de Min., § 87.)

"It is a Jesuitical evasion to say that the Church has the keys only in so far as they are handled in her midst by her ministers. *Bellarmin* makes the objection: 'Peter received the keys on *behalf of the Church, because he received them for the use and profit of the whole Church*, and because he was not only to use them himself, but also to hand them down to his successors, and impart them to all bishops and priests.' Answer: We admit that Peter received the keys for the use and profit of the Church, and holds them in common with other bishops and pastors, but we deny that this is to be understood exclusively, as if the keys were given to Peter and the bishops alone, and not to the whole Church. For, as Peter confessed Christ *on behalf of the Church*, not alone in the sense that that confession availed for *the profit* of the whole Church, but also *because in the confessing Peter the Church herself confessed*: thus also the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given to Peter on behalf of the Church, not only because they were given to him for the *profit and use of the whole Church*, but also because the Church, in the person of Peter, received them, so that she herself should participate *in the use of the same*, as well in other matters embraced under the name of the power of the keys as also *in the election and calling of well qualified ministers of the Word*."

In further illustration of the above statement, we present the following from the celebrated Evangelical Harmony of Chemnitz, Leyser and Gerhard. In their exposition of Matt. xvi. 19, they say:

"First of all we are to inquire what is to be understood by the keys of the kingdom of heaven which Christ here (Matt. xvi. 19), promises. Let us call to mind the fact that Christ, in this conversation with his disciples, has been comparing his Church to a city, or to a house which he himself is building. And indeed the Church is his city, in which he gathers the citizens and subjects of his king-

dom, and his house in which he has deposited all his goods and treasures, viz.: The grace of God, forgiveness of sins, justification, salvation, etc. The handing over of the keys is of old the symbol of a specific, entrusted, transferred authority: for, he who has the keys has access to all. If, *e. g.*, a man gives to his wife the keys, he declares thereby that he acknowledges her as his associate, and entrusts her with the care of the household. So also are the keys entrusted to householders and stewards by their masters, whereby authority is given to them over chambers, cellars, chests, and whatever is contained therein. And so, when *princes* are admitted to a city, the keys of the same are handed over to them by the citizens, in token of their submission to their authority, and in acknowledgment of their authority to admit any one into the city, or exclude him from it. This figure our Lord here applies to the *Church*, whose keys he entrusts to Peter and his associates *in office*, whereby he teaches that he means to appoint them as his stewards and householders, that they are to open the treasures to the worthy, and admit them to the possession and use of the same, but to close them up against the unworthy and unholy and to exclude these from the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. iv. 1. The phrase: "*Keys of the kingdom of heaven*," comprises therefore that function, power and plenary authority in virtue of which everything is performed that is necessary for the kingdom of Christ, or the government of the Church. And this could not be more appropriately explained than by this figure of the keys.

"Nevertheless, the right of every Christian to the keys, even of the most obscure, which he has been entrusted with by Christ, remains inviolate. For, as all the citizens of a free city of the empire, however large their number may be, have common rights and equal freedom, so far as the republic is concerned, and as, for the sake of order, they elect senators and appoint a mayor to preside over them, to whom they commit the keys and statutes of the city, so that he may administer the same in the common name of all, and govern the republic accordingly, just so do the people of the city of God. They have indeed a communion of saints, and all is theirs, whether Paul or Peter, life or death, the present or the future, 1 Cor. iii. 21; they possess all things under the one Head, Christ, who has purchased by the merits of his blood everything necessary to salvation for his Church, and in this especially for every member, even the most ob-

scure; and yet, *for the sake of order, they elect certain persons* to whom THEY COMMIT the administration [or use] of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; these are those who among us are called deacons, pastors, doctors, bishops, or superintendents, etc., so that everything may be done among us decently and in order, according to the teachings of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiv."

IV. Although the Confessors held such clear and decided views in regard to the essential equality of all believers, as over against the claims of a hierarchical caste, yet *they did not understand our Saviour as conferring upon all alike the right ordinarily and publicly to perform the functions of the ministerial office.*

They declare, Art. XIV: "No one dare publicly teach or preach, or administer the Sacraments, unless he be rightly called."

For which *Hutter* assigns the following reasons:

1. "On account of the command of God; Jer. xxiii. 31, Heb. v. 4, Rom. x. 15.
2. "For the sake of *ἐνταξιν* (good order) and the tranquillity of the Church, 1 Cor. xiv. 40.
3. "For certainty of doctrine; for, that it may surely be known what this is, and by whom it is received, there is need of doctrinal investigation and of testimonies.
4. "On account of the conscience of the teacher, that he may be certain that the grace of Christ is with him, and that his hearers also may know that they are listening to an ambassador of God; 2 Cor. v. 20."

Luther was charged by Emser with teaching that the general priesthood made all to be preachers, etc.; to whom he replied (in 1521), "And so you lie when you say that I have made all laymen bishops, priests and ecclesiastics, so that they may at once, *uncalled*, assume the office; you do not add, pious as you are, that I also wrote: Only *extreme necessity* can justify one in doing that to which he has not been regularly called." (Walch., xvii., 1597.)

*Luther*, in 1520, (Letter to Germ. Nob. Walch., x, 302.)

"If we now be all priests alike, then no one is to put himself forward and undertake, without our consent and choice, to do that which we all have the same authority to do. For what is common to all, that no one dare appropriate to himself without the common consent and command. And if it should happen that some one is chosen for such an office, and for his bad conduct is deposed, then

he becomes just what he was before. For the position of a priest, in the Church, is just like that of a civil officer; whilst he is in office he has precedence; but when he is deposed he is a farmer or a citizen just like the rest."

*Luther*, in 1523 (Com. on 1 Peter):

"Now you may say, if that be true, that we are all priests, and are to preach, what will be the state of affairs? Is there to be no difference among the people? Are the women, too, to be priests? Answer: Those who are now called priests were all laymen, as the rest, and have only been chosen as officials by the Church. The difference, therefore, is only outwardly, in virtue of the office, to which one has been called by the Church; but before God there is no difference. And some are put forward from the mass only for this reason that, in the place of the congregation, they may perform the functions of the office that belongs to all, not that one may have more power than another. *Therefore no one should come forward of his own accord and preach in the congregation, but one is to be called forth from the mass and appointed, who may be deposed again, if it be thought proper.*"

How these expressions of the Confession and of Luther were subsequently understood, is manifest from such statements as the following, from *Gerhard* (Loc. Theol. de Sacr., § 29, and de Min. Eccl., § 67).

"So far as Luther is concerned, *he does not concede to all that are baptized the unconditional and absolute right to administer the sacraments*, but he speaks of a certain general *fitness* (aptitudine) which Christians possess; having been received through baptism into the covenant of God, they are fit and suited for this office, if, namely, they be legitimately called to it."

"Believers are called *kings*; but it does not therefore follow that every believer can exercise the office of the civil authority, without a call thereto, for the Apostles speak of *spiritual* kings; and just so, because believers are called *priests*, it does not therefore follow that every one can without a call assume an ecclesiastical office, for the Apostles in like manner speak of *spiritual* priests. For they are called spiritual priests *not with reference to an ecclesiastical office*, but with reference to the spiritual sacrifices which they are to offer to God. Nor has the objection any force when in it we are told that Peter adds that believers are a royal priesthood, that ye should show

forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light ; for we must distinguish between *the general command and calling*, which all Christians receive, along with their consecration as believers, and the *special call* through which the administration of the office of the Word and Sacraments *in the public assemblies of the Church* is committed by common consent to certain persons well qualified for the same ; but that this call is not common to all Christians, is evident from 1 Cor. xii. 29 : Eph. iv. 11 ; James iii. 1."

*Chemnitz* (Exam. c. 85, p. 1687).

"Christ gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to the Church, Matt. xviii. 18. And we give ourselves no concern here about the ridicule of those who cry out : 'Then cobblers and tailors, cooks and day-laborers, have the power of the keys, and thus you build your own Babel and introduce endless confusion.' I answer : Who will deny that *in case of need every believer* may baptize, etc.? And this case of extreme necessity the Church has always made an exception, as Jerome has testified, against the Luciferians, and Augustine against Fortunatus. But, except in case of necessity, this is allowed to no one, unless he be a regularly called and appointed servant of the Church. For this would be to violate the divine rule : How can they preach except they be sent? Rom. x. 15. Again, They ran and I did not send them."

*Henricus Barnerus* (Abriss d. neuen Menschen., p. 374).

"That they [ *i. e.*, Christians] do not all publicly administer the office of teaching, *in publico ministerio*, is owing to the fact that they have not been thereto called *vocationis defectus*. Here we must distinguish between rank and office, *inter statum et officium*. To the *office* belongs a special call, *specialis vocatio*, which must be committed, entrusted. But this is not the case with the *rank*. Thus all Christians are priests, but not all are pastors, for this one can only be if, besides being a Christian and a priest, he has an office and parish entrusted to him."

*Chemnitz* (Exam. II. de S., ord. c. 1).

"All Christians are indeed priests, 1 Peter ii, Rev. 1, for they offer to God spiritual sacrifices ; every one has both the right and the duty to teach the Word of God in his own house, Deut. vi. 1 ; 1 Cor. xiv. But not every Christian dare assume the *public office* of the Word and Sacraments. For not all are apostles, not all are



teachers, 1 Cor. xii. but only those who by a special and legitimate call are set apart for this office by God himself, Acts xiii; Jer. xxiii; Rom. x; and this is done either mediately or immediately."

*Salamon Deyling* (Inst. Prud. Past., p. 403):

"As the right of teaching and of administering the Sacraments belongs *originally* (der Wurzel nach) *to the whole Church*, but the *public exercise* of the same only to its legitimately called *servants*; so *every member of the Church*, just the same as the whole *coetus* (congregation) possesses the *keys* in the same manner as the authority to teach, but only *for private use*, not for public and stated use, lest there should arise confusion that would miserably rend the Church. In the *public* congregation the keys are to be used only by those to whom the whole Church has transferred their exercise and use by a public call."

V. And now the next question that presents itself is: *How is this office to be filled?* Where lies the authority to select and set apart those who are to perform its functions?

To this *Luther* answers (Walch. x, 2547):

"The call to the Gospel Ministry is of two kinds, the one coming *directly from God*, the other *through men* and yet also *just as truly from God*. The first we are not to credit unless it be demonstrated by miracles, such as were performed by Christ and his Apostles. Some were called not by men, *nor through a man*, but were chosen by Jesus Christ and God the Father, such as the prophets and all the apostles. Others were chosen indeed by God, but *through men*, as the disciples of the apostles and all who rightly enter the holy office instead of the apostles until the end of the world."

But this mediate call *through men*, by whom is it to be exercised? By the Ministry alone, or by the Church as a whole?

*Calovius* (Syst. Loc. Th., Tom. viii, p. 334):

"It is known that the *right to call* has been entrusted to the Church, just as the keys and church discipline, Matt. xviii. 18; 1 Cor. iii. 21; iv. 1; Rom. iii. 2; ix. 4; 1 Cor. v., 1 sq. The Church, however, has not transferred this to the presbytery alone, but exercises it directly herself and by the co-operation of all her constituent parts."

*Smalcald Articles*, 67:

"Wheresoever the Church is, there is also the right of administering the Gospel. Wherefore it is necessary for the Church *to re-*

*tain the right of calling, electing and ordaining ministers.* And this right is a special gift bestowed upon the Church, of which no human authority can deprive her."

*Hollazius* (quoted in Schmid's Dogmatik, p. 478, 3d ed.):

"Through the divine call is here understood the appointment of a certain and suitable person to the ecclesiastical office, with the right to teach in public, to administer the sacraments, and exercise ecclesiastical discipline, effected by God, either alone or by intervention of a human instrumentality."

*Gerhard* (xii, 75, in Schmid's Dgm., 478):

"The difference between the *mediate* and *immediate* call consists always and only in this, that the former is effected through ordinary means, divinely appointed for this purpose, but the latter through God himself, who manifests his will concerning the immediate call of each person either by direct personal interference or through some representative."

The *mediate* call is, therefore, none the less to be considered divine: For (*Gerhard*, xii, 79):

"1. It is referred to God as its author, Ps. lxxviii. 11; Is. xli. 27; Jer. iii. 15; xxiii. 4; 1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11.

"2. It is based upon apostolic authority, Acts xiv. 23; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6; ii. 2; 1 Tim. iii. 2; Rom. xv. 18; 1 Tim. v. 21; Acts xx. 22; Col. iv. 17.

"3. The mediate call inherits gracious promises: 1 Tim. iv. 14, 16; 2 Cor. iii. 6; Eph. iv. 12."

*Seckendorf* (Christenstaat, iii., xi., §3):

"It is best that we take our stand upon the position which Christ has himself laid down, when he declared: Wheresoever two or three (to say nothing of a greater assembly) are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, Matt. xviii. 20; whence it follows that even such an assembly or congregation has of itself the power to order and appoint *everything needful for its divine worship*, at which Christ has promised to be present," etc.

*Quenstedt* (Theol. Did. Pol., p. 1509):

"The originally efficacious cause of the ministerial office is God; the less directly constitutive source is the Church. The authority to select and call the ministers of the Word belongs, by divine right, not alone to the priests, or the ecclesiastical order, nor alone to the civil authority, nor alone to people at large, but to the whole

Church ; and without the consent and voice of the people there can be no legitimate call."

*Brochmand* (Theol. Systm., ii., p. 349):

"Our churches ascribe the right of choosing the ministers of the Word to the whole Church, and derive their authority from Acts i. 22, 23. For, when an apostle was to be chosen in the place of the traitor Judas, Peter, it is true, for the sake of order, introduced and presided over the transaction, but the whole Church elected two, between whom the lot was cast. If now the apostles, who were extraordinarily called by Christ, and were endowed with special authority by God, did not presume of themselves to appoint the ministers of the Church, why do the Papal bishops, who are not worthy to be compared to the Apostles as to their gifts, assume this right?"

*Hülseman* (Vind. S. Script., p. 1224):

"The Church in its totality (*ecclesia collectiva*), can ordain suitable persons from among the laity that they may become clergymen."

*Chemnitz* (Ded., i, 2, p. 419):

"The Church in any place is the whole body in which, under Christ as head, all the members of that place are comprised. Eph. iv.; 1 Cor. i. Therefore the call belongs neither to the ecclesiastics alone, nor to the mass of ordinary believers alone, for neither without the other is *the whole Church*; but the call belongs, and must ever belong, to *the whole Church*, and with due regard to order."

It is very surprising that any who claim to teach in accordance with the Confession can maintain the right of the Ministry alone to decide who are to be their successors in office!

Hear the following, for instance, from Löhe (Aphorismen über die neutestamentlichen Aemter, etc., 1849, p. 71):

"Everywhere in the New Testament we see that the holy office begets the Churches, never that the office is merely a transfer of congregational rights and plenary powers, that the Churches confer the office. *The office stands in the midst of the Church like a fruitful tree that has its seed in itself.* As long as the examination and ordination remain in the hands of the Presbyterium (the pastors), it is right, and can be maintained that it completes itself and propagates itself from person to person, from generation to generation. Those who hold it pass it along, and he to whom its incumbents transfer

it holds it as from God. \* \* The office is a stream of blessing that pours itself from the apostles upon their disciples, and from these onward into future times."

And again, page 86: "Observe how entirely different is the appointment of *deacons* (Acts vi.) from that of *pastors*! In the case of the latter the congregation is not called into consultation; *it lies entirely in the hands of the appointing apostles and evangelists*, who, *at their discretion*, and as occasion may require, take the advice of the congregation or of individual members. On the other hand, at the appointment of the *diaconate*, the whole congregation is called together, the plan is laid before it—although, it is true, in the form of a command, for the Apostles are the representatives of the Lord—and it gives and testifies its approbation. And now, how are the deacons chosen? According to a standard of qualification laid down by the Apostles, they are elected by the congregation, then placed before the apostles and ordained by them. We may call the Presbyterium a *sacred aristocracy* of the Church, whilst in the election of the deacons there lies something *democratic*."

Precisely the opposite of this was the special theme of Luther's "Sendschreiben wie man Kirchendiener wählen u. einsetzen soll, an den Rath u. Gemeinde der Stadt Prag., 1523, viz.:

"*That Christians, as spiritual priests, possess all ecclesiastical authority.*" After enumerating all the priestly prerogatives of believers, he concludes thus: "We see here, clearer than the light of day and more surely than sure, whence we are to take the priests or ministers of the Word. Namely, we are to choose them out of the multitude of Christ's followers, and from nowhere else. For, as it has been sufficiently demonstrated that every one has the right to serve in the word, yes, that this has been made the duty of every one when he sees that no one else is at hand, or that those who are at hand are teaching falsely, as Paul has shown, 1 Cor. xiv. 27 sq., 'So that the praises of him that has called us may be shown forth by us all,' 1 Peter ii. 9; *how much more should not then a whole congregation have the right and be under the obligation by means of a general election to commit this office to one or more in their stead?*" (Walch., x., 1861).

Nor are we to be told that this holds merely of the special call to a particular congregation, and not to the general call *to the office*, for Luther writes, in 1533 (Walch., xix., 1565):

"Where there is a holy Christian Church, there all the sacraments must be also, Christ himself and his Holy Spirit. If we then are a holy Christian Church, and have those things that are of the *greatest and most essential importance*, God's Word, Christ, Spirit, faith, prayer, baptism, sacrament, *office of the keys*, etc., *shall we not also have this smallest matter, namely, the power and right to call some to the office*, who are to *minister* to us the Word, baptism, etc. (*which are already here*), and to serve us in these matters—what kind of a church would that be?"

And, at an earlier date, 1520 (in his Letter to the German Nobility, Walch., xix., 202):

"Accordingly we are all by baptism consecrated as priests, as St. Peter says (1 Peter ii. 9): 'Ye are a royal priesthood and a holy nation;' and Rev. v. 10, 'Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests.' For, if there were not a higher consecration in us than the pope or the bishop gives, a priest could never be made by the consecration of pope or bishop, though he might say masses, and preach and give absolution. Therefore the consecration of the bishop is nothing more than if he in the place and on behalf of the whole assembly, would take one out of the number of those, who all have the same authority, and enjoin it upon him to exercise this authority for the others. Just as if ten brothers, sons of a king, heirs alike, would choose one to manage the inheritance for them, they would all be kings and of equal authority, and yet one would be entrusted with the government. And, that I may state it more clearly, if a little company of pious, Christian laymen were taken prisoners and placed in a desert, and had not with them a priest consecrated by a bishop, and would agree to choose one of their own number, married or not, and entrust him with the office of baptizing, administering the communion, absolving and preaching, he would just as truly be a priest as if all the bishops and popes had consecrated him. Whence it follows that in case of need every one can baptize and give absolution, which could not be the case if we were not priests."

The doctrine is stated, syllogistically, thus, by *Gerhard* (Loc. Theol. de Min. Eccl., § 87):

"He who has received from Christ himself the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he has the right to call the servants of the Church. But these keys have been given to the whole Church. Therefore



*the right to call the servants of the Church belongs to the whole Church.* The major premise is proved by the definition of the keys; for by the keys we understand ecclesiastical authority, of which the right to choose the servants of the Church is a part. The minor premise is manifest from the words of Christ, Matt. xv. 19, where to Peter, representing the Church, it is said, 'I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.'"

*Chemnitz* (Exam. ii, loc. 13):

"And here the question arises, who those are by whose votes that election and call is to be decided, so that it may be regarded as divine, that is, that God himself by those means is choosing, calling and sending forth laborers into his harvest. Now we find certain and clear examples of this in the Scriptures. In Acts i. 15, when a successor to Judas was to be appointed, Peter laid the matter not before the apostles alone, but also before the rest of the '*disciples*'—for so the believers were then called—whose number, there collected together, was one hundred and twenty. \* \* \* When deacons were to be elected and called, Acts vi. 2 sq., the apostles do not assume the right of choosing, but they call the *congregation* together, etc. According to Acts xiv. 23, Paul and Barnabas ordain presbyters in certain congregations to whom they have preached the Gospel; but they do not assume for themselves alone the authority to choose and to call, but Luke uses here the word *χειροτονησαντες*, which in 2 Cor. viii. 19, describes the election which is decided by the votes of the congregation, etc. \* \* \* In the case of a legitimate call in the days of the apostles, there were always two factors implicated and demanded, the consent of the congregation and the judgment and confirmation of the presbytery."

The Church does not relinquish (or dispossess herself of) her rights to the universal priesthood when she appoints incumbents of the ministerial office, to perform its functions, in Christ's name, for her sake. No more than American citizens throw away their inalienable right of sovereignty by voting for an incumbent of the Presidential office. These rights and powers are inherent in them, in virtue of their citizenship, and are absolutely inalienable. Just so with the universal priesthood of believers.

It may be asked, however, does not the Church practically exercise this right of calling her servants when she does it *through those already in the holy office*? Is there not by common consent a gen-

eral understanding upon this subject, to the effect that our churches, by retaining the right of giving the special call to a particular field of labor, hold in their hands a check upon the ministry; as though they were thereby continually saying to those who claim the right of examining and setting apart others to the holy office, Be careful what kind of men you select and ordain, or we will refuse to call them to minister to us?

We reply: It has always been found to be a dangerous thing to suffer power to pass from the many to the few. We are neither more nor less human than those who have gone before us. And he has read the history of the Church to little purpose who has not observed how insidiously, almost imperceptibly, and yet how surely, from just such a small beginning as that, ecclesiastical encroachments have advanced, until, as Luther says: "They have established *an order* as though it were appointed by God, and have taken such liberties that in the very midst of Christendom there is a greater difference than between us and the Turks." Unless tendencies toward centralization and monopoly are seasonably checked, history teaches that a revolution is needed to bring back the power and restore it to its true possessors. The world ought by this time to have learned the lesson, that it is best to leave the supreme authority where God intended it to be, viz.: in the masses of the people, and to have it peacefully and steadily administered by those whom the masses select and empower as their agents for that purpose. Such is the true theory of civil government, and such our Church understands to be the scriptural view of the Gospel Ministry.

At the same time it must be acknowledged that the practice of the Church has very generally varied from her theory in this matter. *Baier* (in Schmid's *Dogmatik*, p. 479), thus presents the case:

"The Church, after it is planted, possesses the right and the power of appointing its ministers. For it holds for itself, as the bride, Christ's keys of the kingdom of heaven, given by the bridegroom, Matt. xvi. 18; xviii. 17; and thus, just as it belongs to her to open and shut the kingdom of heaven, so it is hers also to appoint the ministers through whom she opens and shuts. And thus, if we bear in mind that the Church is a kind of republic, and that the ministers of the Word are, so to speak, the magistrates or conductors of public affairs, upon whom the care of the whole republic

rests, it is easily understood that the power of appointing them is vested, *per se*, and in the very nature of the case, *in the whole Church*, nor does it belong to any one part unless, by the common consent of all, it be transferred to some one part."

And *Hollazius* (*ibidem*):

"We must distinguish between the *right* of calling ministers and the *exercise* of the right. The right of calling belongs to the whole Church, and all its ranks and members. But the exercise of the right varies according to the conventional custom of individual churches."

Our Church holds, moreover, that not only the *call* to the Ministry proceeds, under God, *from the whole Church*, by virtue of the universal priesthood and the power of the keys, but also that the *ordination* of those thus summoned to her service, is nothing more than her official and public recognition of such call.

*Melanchthon*, Smalcald Articles, Append. 69, 70):

"These words (1 Peter ii. 9, 'Ye are a royal priesthood,') refer particularly to the true Church, which, as it alone holds the priesthood, must also have the power of choosing and ordaining the servants of the Church. The usual custom of the Church also proves this; for anciently the people chose pastors and bishops, then the bishop of the same place, or living near by, confirmed the elected bishop by the imposition of hands; and in those days *ordination was nothing else than such confirmation.*"

*Chemnitz* (Loc. de Eccl., p. 126):

"Although ordination does not constitute the call, yet, if any one has been rightly called, then that custom is a declaration and a public attestation that the call that preceded it was lawful."

*Balduin* (De Casibus Consc., p. 1032-33):

"Ordination is nothing else than *the public and solemn confirmation of a legitimate call*, that all may know that this person has not taken violent possession of the ecclesiastical office, nor crept in otherwise, after the manner of thieves and robbers, but has entered by the true door. \* \* Ordination is not indispensably and absolutely necessary, \* \* for it is *neither divinely commanded*, so that it cannot be omitted, *nor is its influence so great*, as is pretended by the Papacy, so that it cannot be omitted without great danger; *nor does the efficacy of the office depend upon ordination*, as though the Gospel could not be savingly taught without it; but *it is an eccle-*

*siastical custom* which recommends the servant of the Word and admonishes him of certain duties."

*Gerhard* (xii, 146):

"We deny that ordination is necessary by reason of any such effects as the Papists ascribe to it, as though by it there were conveyed any indelible character, or as if it conferred, *ex opere operato*, gifts requisite to the ministry, concerning which no promise can be adduced from the sayings of Christ and the Apostles."

*Gerhard* (Loc. Theol. de Min., § 154):

"As the right of *calling* belongs to the whole Church, so also *ordination*, which is the publication and attestation of the call, is performed *in the name of the Church*. The Presbytery performs the act of the laying on of hands, but the Church unites with this her prayers. Although, therefore, for the sake of *legitimate good order*, it is proper that the bishop at the same time with the Presbytery lays his hands upon the person to be ordained, yet he acts here not according to his own private will and in virtue of plenary power inhering in himself, but *in the name, through the right, by the vote, under the authority, with the consent, with the sanction, yes, with the prayers of the whole Church*; and thus the ceremony is performed by the bishop, but the act itself is *the act of the Church*, as we see from Acts vi. 3; xiii. 3."

According to this statement, which exhibits the true theory of our Church upon this subject, the Ministry does not, by virtue of its official rank, etc., perpetuate itself, but is perpetually receiving its authority to examine, ordain, etc., fresh from the Church, in which all ecclesiastical power is deposited.

In addition to the *calling* and *ordination* of her ministers, *the Church*, and indeed especially the *ordinary membership of the Church*, has also the duty imposed upon it of watching these her servants and *testing their soundness of doctrine*.

*Augsburg Confession*, Abuses Corrected, Art. xxviii:

"The people and churches owe obedience to the bishops, according to the command of Christ, Luke x. 16, He that heareth you, heareth me. But if they appoint or establish anything contrary to the Gospel, we have the command of God in that case *not to obey them*, Matt. vii. 15, Beware of false prophets; and St. Paul, Gal. i. 8, If we, or an angel from heaven, etc., 2 Cor. xiii. 8, 10."

If it be objected that the laity, whilst having the right to judge of

doctrines, etc., originally vested in them, cannot now exercise that right because it is now by common consent transferred to the ministerial office to be exercised through this for the benefit of the Church; we reply that the Church has no liberty thus to divest herself of a right which is at the same time a duty, imposed upon all her members, not only inclusive of, *but as over against her ministering servants*. Ordinary believers are not only to share with those already in the ministry in calling others into the office, but they are to scrutinize the doctrinal soundness of their teachers, and hold them to the law and testimony—to “try the spirits,” whether they be of God—to search the Scriptures, to see whether their teachings are in accordance with the same, etc.

*Luther*, in 1523 (Ag. Henry VIII, Walch., xix, 424).

“To examine and decide upon doctrine belongs to any and every Christian, and this so positively that he is cursed who interferes with it in the slightest degree. For Christ has established this right in many incontrovertible texts: *e. g.*, Beware of false prophets that come to you in sheep’s clothing. This word he addresses, beyond a doubt, to the people, against the teachers, and commands the people to beware of their false doctrines. But how can they avoid them unless they know what they are? And how can they know this unless they have power to judge? Now he not only gives them power to judge, but he also commands them to exercise it. So that this single passage would be enough against all popes, fathers, councils, decisions of all schools, that have attributed the right of judging and deciding only to bishops and ecclesiastics, and have godlessly and sacrilegiously stolen it away from the people, that is to say the Church, the queen,” etc.

Having thus endeavored to set forth the main topic of our Article, chiefly in the very words of the standard authorities, and with special reference to those features of it at present attracting public attention, we beg leave to express, in conclusion, both our gratification and regret in view of the relation sustained by the General Synod of our Church in this country, as we understand it, to the Confession and to the Scriptures, with reference to the doctrine of the Holy Ministry.

And first, *our gratification*, as we observe how closely our American Lutheran Church, of the General Synod, clings to the Scriptures and to the Confession in her views and practices in re-



gard to this subject. Her official utterances, and the private publications of her most learned and influential representative men, distinctly echo, in the main, the confessional statements that have been spread before you, and also the spirit of the Confession upon other features of the office not specially adverted to, just as these reflect the teachings of the Word of God. We have reason to congratulate ourselves that those who, in the providence of God, gave shape to the theology and life of our Church in this country, were principally men trained under the influence of an essentially orthodox Pietism, and that through them the revived spirituality of the German Lutheran Church passed over into and gave type to our American Lutheran Church life within the General Synod. That such was our origin, accounts for the fact that, in some respects, our church policy approaches more nearly to the *ideal* of the Reformers and their immediate successors than that which our Church was compelled, by the force of unfavorable circumstances, to adopt upon her native soil. The Lutheran Church never had a completely fair opportunity of putting into practice her principles upon the subject of the Gospel Ministry until she found it in these western wilds, absolutely free from all state control and enjoying entire religious liberty. Thus disenthralled, our Church rejoiced in the opportunity of actualizing much that she had longed for in vain when fretting in the shackles of Erastianism. For all of this we feel devoutly thankful.

#### WHAT OCCASION, THEN, HAVE WE FOR REGRET?

We entertain profound respect for the piety, the learning, and the wisdom of those who laid the foundations of our Church in this country, and of those who, in the same spirit, organized our General Synod. We owe them a lasting debt of gratitude for what they accomplished in the line of advance just indicated. But we cannot dismiss this subject without modestly and reluctantly expressing our heartfelt regret, in view of what we have long regarded and deplored as a stopping short of what they might and should have accomplished in this direction. We lament that they were not able entirely to free themselves from inherited prejudices, and to carry out, with rigid consistency, the Scriptural doctrine of our Church upon the subject of the Gospel Ministry.

Unfortunately, in our opinion, several features were engrafted upon our system of ecclesiastical polity which mar its symmetry and detract from its otherwise perfectly scriptural character.

We refer particularly to three points, viz.:

1. The sealing up of the mouth of a regularly appointed delegate to the legislative assembly of the Church if his pastor happen not to be present;
2. To the exclusion of the entire mass of the representatives of the churches from all participation in certain kinds of ecclesiastical business; and,
3. The practical exclusion of the laity from all share in the selection and setting apart of young men for the ministry.

We cannot but regard these features of our Church government as violations of the scriptural rights of the laity to a full and equal share in all that pertains to the sound and healthful administration of ecclesiastical affairs, and our conviction that the present agitations and discussion of the elementary principles of scriptural truth upon this subject will lead to such a readjustment of the relations between our ministry and people, as to bring about a complete realization of the beautiful harmony between them, anticipated by the sagacity of the fathers in the Reformation period, but placed beyond their reach by the circumstances that surrounded them.

Already, indeed, has the *first* of these obnoxious features been removed from the constitutions of some of our Synods, and in these the representatives of the churches are now admitted to an equal share in that portion of the ecclesiastical legislation that is designated *Synodical*. There exists no longer that odious distinction between clergy and laity which seemed to imply that a layman would not know how to vote unless his pastor were there to direct him; or, if this were not its purpose, then that cunning provision that so effectually placed the reins of government in the hands of the clergy, by making it absolutely impossible that there should ever be a preponderance of lay votes in the Synod.

And as to the *second* of these obnoxious features, the practice of some of our Synods has been somewhat modified, despite the spirit and letter of the constitution. In some of them the representatives of the churches are informed, at a certain stage of the proceedings, that they need not retire, as they formerly were requested to do, but can remain, if they choose, whilst the clergy attend to certain kinds of ministerial business. A move in the right direction, certainly; and an indication, we hope, of something better. One more step, and

that the essential one, of giving the lay delegates an equal voice with the ministry *in all ecclesiastical affairs*, and all will be right.

Such a change as that would include the correction of what appears to us to be the chief defect of all, viz.: the practical exclusion of the laity from all share in the selection and setting apart of young men for the ministry. Some ten years ago our feeble voice was raised in behalf of a reform in this matter, advocating "*the right and the duty of the whole Church, through her representatives, clerical and lay, to take an active part in the discussion and decision of all questions affecting her welfare, and, among others, especially also in the great question as to WHO SHALL CONSTITUTE HER MINISTRY.*" According to our present Synodical constitution the laity are not allowed to take any part whatever in deciding this question. It is solely a prerogative of the clergy. And apologize for this feature of our Church polity as we may, it in effect amounts to constituting the clergy a self-perpetuating class, just the very abuse against which the Reformers so vehemently protested. Allow us simply to mention the grounds upon which our plea was based, whilst we refer those who may feel a special interest in the question to our Article in the forty-seventh number of the *Evangelical Review* for the argument in detail.

The points are, that by such reform we would,

"1. Bring back the Church in this particular into conformity with primitive Christian usage.

2. That we would practically and fully illustrate one of the fundamental principles of the Reformation, which in this feature of our Church government is strangely ignored ;

3. That we would hereby accord with our brethren of several other branches of the Protestant Church in acknowledging the true position of the laity in the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs ;

4. That we would thereby avoid much unnecessary offence ;

5. That we would furnish an additional guarantee for the preservation of sound doctrine and pure morals in the Church ; and,

6. That we would secure a more cordial interest in the Church on the part of the laity, and stimulate their zeal in laboring for her welfare."

On all these points our convictions have only deepened with time, and we cannot conceal the gratification it has afforded us to find that the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary of the General

Synod, in selecting a person to prepare the Holman Lecture upon the Fifth Article of the Augsburg Confession, saw fit to fix their choice upon one who had so frankly and earnestly been pleading for a readjustment of the relations of the clergy and laity in our ecclesiastical jurisprudence. It is hardly to be supposed that this choice was made at random. If it was done with any reference to the fact that we have adverted to, it may be hailed as an indication of progress in what we feel assured to be the right direction. If it was not done with any such design, it has at least afforded a favorable opportunity for the utterance, on the part of a true child of the Church, of long-cherished and ever-deepening convictions on a subject of momentous importance.

# ARTICLE VI.

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## NEW OBEDIENCE.

BY C. A. STORK, D. D.

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IT is not necessary, in order to vindicate the excellence of the Augsburg Confession as a standard of Christian faith, that it should be shown to be a symmetrical system of doctrine. Enthusiasts have professed to find in it such a system. But the attempts to make this symmetry apparent have not persuaded the unbiased that it has any existence, outside the minds of indiscreet admirers. The Confession was not shaped under such circumstances, nor by such aims, as must conspire in order to elaborate completeness. Systems of speculative truth come to perfection, as the particles of matter organize into the flawless crystal, in a state of absolute quiescence. But the history of the Confession is the history of the resolution of two antagonistic forces. The Confession, as has been well said, was properly an apology. It represented the compromise—perhaps an unconscious compromise, yet still a compromise—made by those who stood between two mighty forces; on the one hand, the attracting power of the Romish Church, combining in itself all the subtle force of association, habit, traditionary reverence, and desire for peace, and, on the other, the repelling power of truth, simple and absolute, working through minds enlightened and constrained by the word of God. They who framed it had no mind to draw out a perfect scheme of Christian doctrine. They had in view a practical purpose. That purpose involved the harmony of two conflicting aims, viz: to bring into strong relief the cardinal truths of the Catholic faith, in which they were cordially at one with the Romish Church, and yet to emphasize the specially evangelical



doctrines, wherein they felt themselves compelled to bear testimony to the unadulterated gospel of Christ, as against vital errors in that Church. These two points were to be kept in view, as the landmarks of the course down which they had to steer their difficult way.

The shaping of such a scheme of doctrine would naturally enough result in anything but a symmetrical standard of faith. It was an attempt to do that in the sphere of theology, which has been realized in the sphere of political science, in the growth of that anomalous but very useful thing, the English Constitution. Take away the history of the struggle that preceded and attended the formation of the Confession, and the first feature in it that will strike a candid mind, is its lack of symmetry. Read it in the light of the aims and hopes of its framers, and it is at once seen to be a work of matchless skill. As a purely logical statement of Christian doctrine, it is crude in form. As a practical testimony to the essential truths of the gospel, as over against the errors and perversions of Rome, it is a perfect organization. Read in this light, its abrupt transitions, as in the passage from the Article on Justification to that on the Ministry, are master-strokes of strategy; its redundancies, as in the case of Articles VI. and XX., are the necessary defences of the Reformed position. It is in this light continually that the connection of the several Articles, and the force of each separate Article, must be estimated.

There is, for instance, no logical connection, viewed purely in the light of theological science, between the Article on "The Ministerial Office" and that on "New Obedience." But when we remember, that one of the strong fortresses of the Papal Church was the asserted power of the clergy to open and to shut the gate of heaven to men, and that linked to it in strategic order, stood that other dogmatic fortress of the fiction of the saints' merits vested in the clergy, with full powers to bestow on others as part of the purchase of salvation, then the connection of the Article that strips the ministry of all powers of salvation, with that which relegates "good works" to their true position, as fruits of faith and not the price of salvation, is evident enough.

In this light of history, we shall attempt to open the meaning of this Sixth Article of the Augsburg Confession, "concerning New Obedience."

The Article reads as follows:\*

"They likewise teach, that this faith must bring forth good fruits; and that it is our duty to perform those good works, which God has commanded, because it is his will, and not in the expectation of thereby meriting justification before him. For, remission of sins and justification are secured by faith; as the declaration of Christ testifies: 'When ye shall have done all these things, say, we are unprofitable servants.'

"The same thing is taught by the ancient ecclesiastical writers: for Ambrose says, 'This has been ordained by God, that he who believes in Christ shall be saved without works, receiving remission of sins gratuitously through faith alone.'"<sup>†</sup>

The doctrine of the Article is that of the vital connection of faith and holiness of life: it is a reaffirmation of that irrefragable chain which the apostle James forged out in his declaration that "faith without works is dead." In its connection, as part of the Confession, it grows logically out of Article IV. on Justification. In that Article was affirmed the Pauline doctrine, that the sinner is made just before God, and acknowledged as his child freely through faith,

\* The Translation of the Article given above is that of the "Book of Worship" as rendered from the Latin, a copy of which is subjoined from Müller's Edition of the Symbolical Books, 1860.

#### ART. VI. DE NOVA OBEDIENTIA.

Item docent, quod *fides illa debeat bonos fructus parere*, et quod oporteat bona opera mandata a Deo facere propter voluntatem Dei, non ut confidamus per ea opera justificationem coram Deo mereri. Nam remissio peccatorum et justificatio fide apprehenditur, sicut testatur et vox Christi: *Quum feceritis hæc omnia, dicite, servi inutiles sumus*. Idem docent et veteres scriptores ecclesiastici. Ambrosius enim inquit: Hoc constitutum est a Deo, ut qui credit in Christum, salvus sit, sine opere, sola fide, gratis accipiens remissionem peccatorum.

<sup>†</sup>We may remark briefly, that the authority quoted, by the authors of the Confession, from the Fathers, is unhappily invalidated by a mistake. "The ancient ecclesiastical writers" give abundant testimony to substantiate the doctrine emphasized in this part of the Article (see the citation in Chemnitz, Quenstedt, Gerhard in loc, et passim); but Ambrose is not the author of the passage ascribed to him. It is found in a commentary on the Pauline Epistles attributed to Ambrose, but which a more careful criticism has decided not to be the work of this Father. Others have attributed it to the deacon Hilary. Its origin, though certainly patristic, is left, as to its particular sources, wholly in doubt. See Walch: *Introductio in Libros Symbolicos*, pp. 276-279.

without reference either to his outward works or to his inward affections. On this, after the somewhat illogical interpolation of Article V., on the "Ministerial Office," followed in most natural sequence the necessary complement and completion of the doctrine of faith, that it must be a living faith working by love and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. "They likewise teach that this faith must bring forth good fruits." That sentence contains the logical kernel of the whole Article; the rest is but the expansion and adjustment of the central thought.

We will examine first this central truth, and then the qualifications by which it is defined and guarded. This order of discussion involves the consideration of the following points:

1. The Necessity of the New Obedience.
  2. The Nature and Limitations of it.
  3. The Grounds of its Obligation.
- First, then, in order of importance we have to consider

#### I. THE NECESSITY OF THE NEW OBEDIENCE.

The really salient feature of this Article is the stress laid on the *necessity* of "good works." "This faith *must* bring forth good fruits;" "it is *our duty* to perform those good works which God has commanded." This affirms the necessity of right living. It affirms, too, the necessity of right living as an essential constituent or outflow of true religion. It makes holiness of life, conformity to the law of rectitude, to be bound up in the same necessity with the exercise of faith. It puts the obligation to good works into the same category with the obligation to worship and to trust in God. It unites what the common tendency of the religions of the world has almost uniformly separated, the religious sentiment, and the moral sense. The two may be, and are to be, distinguished, but not severed. We are under an obligation, felt by the rudest savage, to adore God. We are moved by a like potent sense of obligation to obey the law of right in the practice of life. But whilst neither is ever wholly extinguished, yet in the experience of the race there comes continually into view a rift between the two, tending ever to wider and wider division. In the pagan religions this is very marked. The code of religion there is one thing; the code of morals is altogether another. In the grosser forms of paganism they become directly antagonistic, as where the religious sentiment of the

Hindoo mother moves her to kill her child; as in the worship of the Grecian Aphrodite in Asia Minor, where a part of the cultus was the practice of unchastity. But as religion becomes purified by right reason, this chasm is made narrower, until in the revelation of truth given in Christianity, the separation is wholly lost, and the connection between religion and good morals, between faith and works, is made so close that they are bound up with the same cord of obligation. They are enclosed in the same necessity, and enforced by the same sanction of conscience and command. At last the religious sentiment and the moral sense merge wholly into each other, and become one in that peculiarly spiritual quality of the soul, for which pagan languages, indeed, furnish no adequate term, but which we know by the name of *holiness*.\* In that are blended and lost in one, the aspiration of the soul to the personal God, and the imperative of the conscience impelling to the right. It was to express this organic union, this vital integration of faith with good works, that this article was shaped.

I have said that this doctrine of the necessary union of holiness in practice with faith, lies at the very foundation of Christianity, and intimated that all false religions have failed in securing the connection. They have so failed practically, and, for the most part, even in idea. But yet this necessity of right living, as one of the vital organs of true religion, was not wholly unperceived even by the pagan world. The best minds of Greece and Rome felt, and more or less clearly taught, that there could be no true worship of God without the practice of goodness in the life. The whole scope of that most wonderful passage in all heathen literature, the *Apology* of Socrates, is to this effect: "If you release me, O Athenians," says Socrates, in substance, "I shall only go back to tell the young men that there is nothing better than to cultivate justice and temperance and knowledge in the soul." It is the final protest of the martyr-spirit against the divorce between religion and right-living, that was attempted to be made by the Sophists in Athens; an attempt that was only too effectually realized, in later times, by the Romish Church.

In the Second Alcibiades† there is a discussion between Alcibi-

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\*See De Quincey in frequent allusions to the poverty of the Greek language, though so rich in all other vocabularies, in terms expressive of the spiritual ideas of the Hebrew and Christian faith.

†2d Alcib., 149, E. 150.

ades and Socrates concerning the efficacy of prayer; and the conclusion is reached that no religious service, whether of prayer or sacrifice, is acceptable to God that is offered by a corrupt man. "It would be a dreadful thing," says Socrates, "if the gods looked to gifts and sacrifices, and not to the soul, if a person be holy and just. Justice and self control, it seems then, are honored above all things by the gods:" which sounds very much like the answer made by Samuel to Saul when he rebuked his sin of disobedience, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Indeed, as soon as the mind of man begins to right itself, after the perturbations of the great storm of sin in the heart, and to take its bearings, it settles inevitably to the conviction that any true service or worship must go forth into obedience. Epictetus and Socrates, in their stammering and incoherent way, join their voices with that of the apostle James, saying, "Faith without works is dead." "Be assured," says Epictetus, "that the essence of piety toward God lies in this, to form right opinions concerning him, as existing, and as governing the universe justly and well. Fix yourself in this resolution to obey him, and yield to him, and willingly follow him amidst all events. When you have recourse to divination \* \* attend to the great diviner, the Pythian God, who once cast out of the temple him who neglected to save his friend."\* So, according to the great Stoic moralist, to pray in the temple is of no avail, if one neglect to do his duty out of doors. This is only the concrete form of the abstract statement of our Article: "This faith must bring forth good fruits \* \* it is our duty to perform those good works which God has commanded."

With this writing of God in the natural conscience and heart, the revelation of God in his word is in full accord. If any one aim is clear in all God's revealed plan, as the final end to be secured by the work of redemption, it is that men may be brought to the practice and enjoyment of holiness. If faith is a pre-eminent grace, it is so because it alone can open the way through Christ into the actual possession of this holiness. It is blessed, mainly, because it leads to that which is still more blessed. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Solomon was as near to a speculative philosopher as the Hebrew mind, with

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\* The Works of Epictetus translated by T. W. Higginson, pp. 387, 388, 389.



its intensely practical and spiritual bent, apparently could come; and he joins in the solemn verdict of the reason of the heathen world, "naturally Christian," to the clear revelation of the Holy Ghost, when he sums up his speculations on life and religion in the close of Ecclesiastes: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

This is the end of ends. This is the ultimate goal of that whole vast sweep of catastrophe, development and deliverance wrought out in the history of redemption. As Paul expresses it, "our Saviour Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The Reformers felt this truth deeply. It is true, their controversy with Rome hinged on the doctrine of Justification by faith. But that which drove them to assert a free justification, without regard to works, was their recognition, that the righteousness demanded by God was too high for them, and yet only their just debt. Man must be justified gratuitously through faith, because he could never fulfil the requirements of a law that was holy and just and good. But, being justified, disencumbered of his load of past guilt, no pretence to religion could be allowed for a moment that did not acknowledge the claim of the law to a full obedience. No faith could be thought worthy the name that did not spontaneously work the works of holiness. The cry of the justified man is, "Oh, how love I thy law." Luther says, "It is necessary that pious teachers should as diligently press the doctrine concerning good works as the doctrine concerning faith. For Satan bitterly hates and resists both. Apart from the matter of justification, no one is able to commend the good works that are commanded by God highly enough."\*

Through the twilight of moral consciousness in the Church, the Reformers groped their way to the fundamental truth of this Article. It was not seen so clearly then, as the Church is coming to see now, that the one final necessity in God's government is habitual and actual goodness. But the Confession gives no uncertain sound on this vital point. It declares, with a sufficiency needing no fortifica-

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\* See Gerhard, *Loci Theolog.*, Vol. VIII., p. 22.

tion in these days of light and strength, "that this faith must bring forth good fruits; and that it is our duty to perform those good works which God has commanded."

A truth so cardinal to Christianity, so imbedded in the whole texture of Scripture, so naturally apprehended by man's innate sense of religion, could not have been wholly lost, even in the corruption of the Romish Church. In its formal affirmation, it never had been lost. The phrase "good works" had been blazoned on her banners, and sounded from her pulpits, until it had become nauseous to men. But, as disease changes the healthy functions of the body into sources of evil, so the pervading plague, in the life of that Church, had turned the truth, that holiness is necessary, into a moral poison. When the Reformers declared that "faith must bring forth good fruits, and that it is our duty to perform good works," the whole Romish faculty could say, Amen. But the next step taken in this Article showed the gangrene which, under the name of "good works," had eaten nearly all true holiness out of the heart of the Church. The first step, in the definition of the doctrine, was to determine what are the "good fruits," "good works," that constitute holiness.

## II. THE NATURE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE NEW OBEDIENCE.

On this point the Confession is very explicit. It determines both by *exclusion* and *inclusion*, the scriptural character of that holiness which is required in believers. By declaring the rule of holiness, and its origin, it defined what was not, and what was, essential to the New Obedience.

*a. By exclusion:* "It is our duty to perform those good works *which God has commanded.*" The rule of "good works" is the express command of God. We are to do those things which God bids us, and no more. This one phrase, "which God has commanded," struck a fatal blow. It was a two-edged argument. It not only sheared away the cunning web of works of supererogation, which Rome had used to catch souls in, as silly flies; but it also demolished the whole fabric of multiplied devotions, penances, ecclesiastical duties, fasts, pilgrimages, mortifications, which had grown to a yoke, like that complained of by Peter, "which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear."

It had been taught that there were services of religion, and good

works, not demanded by the law of God, and yet in themselves good, and therefore worthy of reward. By the performance of what were called "*consilia evangelica*," fastings, pilgrimages, vows of monasticism, poverty, obedience, continence, and the like, it was held to be possible to lay up a treasure of merit above and beyond all that the strict law of God required.\* The logical outgrowth from this was the doctrine of the transfer of merit, the procuring of pardon and eternal life through the merits of the saints.† Then followed, in train, the intercession of saints, the mechanical theory of holiness, by which righteousness was made something that could be put on and taken off, without any change in the inner man, until at last, the monstrous shock of the doctrine of Papal indulgence, according to which a man living in sin could, for money, purchase pardon and salvation of the Holy Father who kept the treasury of the saints' merits, roused the besotted nations to the protest of the Reformation.

This simple phrase of the Confession, "which God has commanded," like the smiting of the sun on the rack of the morning mist, dissolved the whole cunning fabric of works of supererogation. That only is true obedience which can show for its sanction a "Thus saith the Lord."

Luther says, in his Sermon concerning good works, "it is required of any work that professes to be a service of God, not only that it aim at the glory of God, but also that it be commanded by him."

"Those good works are not truly good, which each one devises himself with a good intention, or which are performed according to human tradition, but those which God himself has prescribed and commanded in his word."‡

Chemnitz in his chapter, "*quae sint opera in quibus Deus vult renatos exercere obedientiam*," details at length the rule of new obedience:

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\* Bellarmin, in defending this doctrine, goes so far as to collect a number of passages from the early Church Fathers, Origen, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzum, Chrysostom, Cyprian, Ambrose, Gregory the Great, to show that they held the doctrine of works which more than satisfy the requirement of the law.—*Müller's Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Vol. I., p. 51.

† "Thomas Aquinas places the evangelical counsels, and the more than sufficient works, entirely in the sphere of asceticism;" *i. e.*, they belong to a sphere of holiness beyond what the strict law requires, and above the capacity of ordinary men.—*Müller's Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Vol. I., p. 52.

‡ Formula of Concord—Good Works.

1. Not what seems to us right.
2. Not what has been suggested by our good intent.
3. Not what has been handed down from our fathers.
4. But what God has positively commanded.\*

In another place, he condenses the scriptural argument against works of supererogation into a nutshell: "It is most true that the Holy Spirit renews the heart and makes it will and do obedience to God. Does God therefore wish that the renewed should, of their own motion and private counsel, or from traditions of men, choose the works wherein they shall glorify God? By no means: for Paul expressly condemns *εθελονθησκειας* (self-imposed services) (Col. ii. 23). God wishes, therefore, the whole life of the regenerate to be ruled by his word, not only in faith, but also in good works. Charity, which is the root and sum of all good works, is said to be no more than the fulfilling of the law."†

The horns of the dilemma, on which the whole theory of "works" was impaled, were inevitable. If a work is commanded by God, then it is our duty to do it, and when it is done most perfectly, we have only performed our whole duty; if not commanded, it is no "good work." "Who hath required this at your hand?" is the stern query with which all "*evangelica consilia*" and works of supererogation are met.

This was returning to the old landmarks. It was a reinstatement of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only infallible rule of practice. It was not only a declaration of the necessity of holiness, but it was also a determination of the standard by which all goodness was to be measured and directed. It was not only pointing out the direction in which we must steer, but it was furnishing also the chart and compass by which to steer. The Reformers aimed primarily to correct the errors of the Roman apostasy. But their correction, like all true reform, reached farther than they could see:

———"they builded better than they knew."

They have furnished a permanent rule of true righteousness. What is the boundary of right? Where does the domain of abso-

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\* Loci Theologici Chemnitii, Pars Tertia, p. 14.

† Loci Theologici Chemnitii, Pars Tertia, p. 37.

lute duty end, and the field of expedience, the weighing of means and ends, begin? How clear is the definition of the Confession: "those good works which God has commanded."

We may test the universal application of this rule on some of the latest-born errors of our own times. Mr. J. S. Mill represents a movement in our day, to put aside the express command of God as a standard of right, on the ground that Christian morality is deficient in scope. "Many essential elements of the highest morality," says this author in his work "On Liberty," "are among the things which are not provided for in the recorded deliverances of the Founder of Christianity. \* \* I believe that other ethics than any which can be evolved from exclusively Christian sources must exist side by side with Christian ethics, to produce the moral regeneration of mankind." This has a very grand sound: the revelation that is heralded with such solemn trumpetings must be splendid, indeed. But when Mr. Mill descends from the sublimities of vague generalities, to specify the corrections he would graft on the moral code propounded in God's word, we find that it is with his scheme, as with a great deal of modern philosophy, "*ignotum pro magnifico est*." Christian ethics are too narrow for modern expansion. Why? "Its ideal," Mr. Mill answers, "is negative rather than positive; passive rather than active; innocence rather than nobleness; abstinence from evil rather than energetic pursuit of good. In its precepts (as has been well said), 'Thou shalt not' predominates unduly over 'Thou shalt.'" We have only to confront this (calling it by the mildest name) misrepresentation with the simple utterance of Christ to see its falsity: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Add to this the elaborations of Christ's command to be found in the twelfth chapter of Romans, the third and fourth of Philippians, and in the close of Paul's epistles generally—and it must be a strange conscience that complains of this rule of the Confession as too circumscribed. "The good works which God has commanded" in the Old and New Testaments, open a field for the "energetic pursuit of good," which the noblest men the world has ever held, have confessed themselves unable to fill up, or even to fully compass in their thoughts.

It is not strange that men disallowing the validity of the Scriptures as the revealed will of God, should disparage the ethics of the



Bible. But something of this supercilious feeling of superiority to the plain rule of God's word reveals itself in the new commandments promulgated touching good morals in many quarters professedly Christian. The so-called liberal and radical churches of our day are full of these maggots of a new and advanced morality, which are to hatch out into something that shall soar beyond the narrow pales of the written word. New virtues are invented, and new sins discovered every day. Yesterday a new commandment was proclaimed: "Thou shalt not drink wine." To-day another precept is added: "Thou shalt give the ballot to woman." All questions of expedience and means are attempted to be brought within the scope of a positive moral precept. And he who holds only by the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount is in danger of being thought no better than a publican and sinner. To all such inventors of new virtues it may be commended as a wholesome exercise, to ponder the simple rule of the Confession, "it is our duty to perform those good works which God has commanded." "Those," says Prof. Alexander, "who undertake to be more righteous than God's law, in any respect, will be sure to compensate their work of supererogation by greater license in some other form of sin. I once knew a candidate for the ministry who denounced as a sin eating meat and drinking tea and coffee, and, if I remember right, any violation of Prof. Hitchcock's prescription for avoiding dyspepsia. He ended with becoming the hierophant of a conventicle of free-love Perfectionists, and doing what he might to turn temples into brothels."

*b. By inclusion.* The Confession not only excluded from the definition of "good works" the notions of men and the traditions of the Church. It included, also, within its scope that which practically Rome had cast out. The phrase "good works" had, under the manipulation of the ecclesiastical system, been emptied of nearly all spiritual meaning. To the Romish layman the term meant not love to God, love to men, purity of heart, "the fruits of the Spirit," but the performance of innumerable external acts of devotion, penance, ritual correctness, and the like. Hence the tremendous recoil of Protestantism against these so-called "good works;" a rebound so violent as to occasion the reproach of the Romish writers that the Reformers despised good works, and taught that there was no need of them. But the Confession is equally careful to assert the absolute necessity of the New Obedience, and to point out its origin and

scope. They, and they only, are truly good works, which flow from a living faith in God. "*This faith*" (that described in Article IV.) "*must bring forth good fruits.*" The New Obedience is to come forth, not on the mechanical compulsion of an ecclesiastical command, nor at the sheer impulse of hope and fear in an unrenewed heart, but from a faith that works by love.

"The first and chief work," says Melancthon, "is faith itself: God especially requires in his worshipers this faith, and this confidence produces the love of God."\* This gives us the source and extent of the New Obedience. It begins in faith. It is fed at that deepest of all fountains in human nature, opened only by the divine hand, the trust of the soul in an invisible, but real and ever present God. The world, in its best moods, has conceived of high, ideals of virtue and rectitude, but it could never command the energy to make them actual. Men have dreamed beautifully of goodness but none have ever been able to put it into fact, nor even long to keep their dream before them clear in outline and fresh in color.† There

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\*Corpus Reformat., Vol. XXI., pp. 311, 312.

†Lecky notices the immeasurable superiority of Christianity over Paganism in this respect, in a very brilliant passage: "The ethics of Paganism were part of a philosophy. The ethics of Christianity were part of a religion. The first were the speculations of a few highly cultivated individuals, and neither had, nor could have, any direct influence upon the masses of mankind. The second were indissolubly connected with the worship, hopes and fears of a vast religious system, that acts at least as powerfully on the most ignorant as on the most educated. The objects of the Pagan systems were to foretell the future, to explain the universe, to avert calamity, to obtain the assistance of the gods. They contain no instruments of moral teaching analogous to our institution of preaching, or to the moral preparation for the reception of the sacrament, or to confession, or to the reading of the Bible, or to united prayer for spiritual benefits. To make men virtuous was no more the function of the priest than of the physician. On the other hand, the philosophic expositions of duty were wholly unconnected with the religious ceremonies of the temple. To amalgamate these two spheres, to incorporate moral culture with religion, and thus to enlist in its behalf that desire to enter, by means of ceremonial observances, into direct communication with Heaven, which experience has shown to be one of the most universal and powerful passions of mankind, was among the most important achievements of Christianity. It was the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity, that its moral influence was not indirect, casual, remote, or spasmodic." (History of European Morals, vol. ii., p. 2.) Mr. Lecky dwells mainly on the instruments of this moral culture, preaching, sacraments, reading the Bible, united worship; but all these only lead our thoughts along to the

is no future for any rectitude that is not rooted in God. There is no summer flow for the streams that head short of the heart of the mountains. This unfailing spring the Confession finds in the faith that unites to God.

"With the reconciliation to God, that is effected by faith, comes also the gift of the Holy Spirit, which renews the heart and causes it to begin to love God, and delight in his law after the inner man : in this way come good works, and they are truly such which proceed from such a root."\*

Thus the Confession supplies, in the strong throbbing heart of faith, an engine that can propel the whole machinery of right living. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." It is faith that unites to Christ, and so to God. It is faith that enables man to bring forth good fruits. Justification and sanctification are thus seen to be twin branches shooting, with their broad latitude of grateful shade and fruitage, from the one trunk of a living faith. We are saved by faith, and we are made clean and able to good works, holy living, by the same faith in God.

One point more, and we have done with this side of our subject. What is the scope of this term, "good works?" What are the "good fruits" that "faith must bring forth," the "good works" which "it is our duty to perform?" The nature of the truth declared is disguised somewhat by the narrow and technical character of the terms used. The phrases "good fruits," "good works," meant to the ear of the world that had been so long filled with the teaching of Rome, only outward acts of morality, or even less than this, mere ritualistic observances and ecclesiastical duties. They were almost hopelessly infected with the plague of formalism and a technical holiness. They were but poorly fitted to carry the large meaning of the Reformers.

It is almost sad to see how the men who built the superstructure of the New Theology, labor to disentangle their deep scriptural views concerning holiness from the trammels of words which they felt, in a manner, compelled to use. They were not the first, nor the

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source whence flowed the life that used these, to that "faith," which "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It was this divine origin of the New Obedience that the Confessors had in mind, when they declared "that this faith must bring forth good fruits."

\* *Loci Theologici Chemnitii, Pars Tertia*, pp. 29, 30.

last, who gave birth to thoughts too great to be cradled in the language of their schools and times. They meant, in their struggling way, to declare that true religion must include right living, that holiness of life is eternally wedded to faith in God. But the words by which they affirm this are like the shield in the old story that showed red or white as it was seen from opposite sides: to the Roman antagonists they meant one thing; to us, who read them in the light of their whole theology, altogether another. Expand these words, "good fruits," "good works," to mean holiness of heart and life, and we have the doctrine the authors of the Confession intended to teach.

Chemnitz, in his chapter, "*Quæ opera facienda*," says: "Not only is it our duty to perform the external works of the Decalogue, which even impious men can counterfeit, but also to originate an inward obedience. But these inner works are belief in God's word, the fear of God, trust in God."\*

"The first and chief grade of good works," says Gerhard, "is inward obedience of the heart to God, of which the principal parts are the fear and love of God." He then proceeds, in the order of their dignity, to specify five classes of good works, in the last of which he puts "the ceremonial duties of the first table;" meaning by these what may be called ritualistic or ecclesiastical observances.† This was just reversing the old order. Rome had so long accustomed men to a mere mechanical performance of routine duties, that it was almost forgotten what holiness was. Her highest virtue was obedience to the Church. A spiritual, inward obedience, seemed something very petty. Her order of obligation was, first the Church, then man, then God. Baxter declares, in one of his characteristic passages, that after much horror of Rome, as corrupt in doctrine, he had, in his riper wisdom, come to see that her worst heresy was that of practice. "Ignorance and immorality in the people," was her high crime. The substitution of artificial duties, pertaining to the outward life, for what the old writers love to call works of inward obedience, the inward motions of the Spirit, was a worse error, in reality, than Mariolatry, Purgatory, Intercession of Saints, or even Justification by Works. This error the authors of the Con-

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\* *Loci Theologici Chemnitii*, Pars Tertia, p. 1.

† *Loci Theolog.*, J. Gerhard, Vol. VIII., p. 2.

fession corrected, by restoring to their large, scriptural and spiritual sense, the terms, "good fruits," "good works." Good works were—Love to God, Trust in God, Love to men, Purity of heart and life—in fine, the "fruits of the Spirit," described by the apostle. Thus the stream of a living faith was turned at last into that Augean stable, the Romish doctrine of "works."

We come, in the course of our inquiry, to consider,

### III. THE GROUNDS OF OBLIGATION TO THE NEW OBEDIENCE.

To the mind of the Reformers, this was the most important side of the whole doctrine. This is evident from the very structure of the Article. It has on it the smell of battle. It is framed, in this part of it, with a view to defence against the errors of Rome, rather than to a positive and purely dogmatic statement of the truth. Negatively, therefore, the ground of obligation is stated, and defended quite at length: "They teach that this faith must bring forth good fruits, etc., \* \* *not in the expectation of thereby meriting justification before God. For, remission of sins, and justification, are secured by faith; as the declaration of Christ testifies: 'When ye shall have done all those things, say, We are unprofitable servants.' The same thing is taught by the ancient ecclesiastical writers: for Ambrose says: 'This has been ordained of God, that he who believes in Christ shall be saved without works, receiving remission of sins through faith alone.'*" This was to meet the ground of obligation that logically correlated itself to the Romish theory of salvation. At Rome salvation had a definite price. Man, it was taught, could, and must, merit pardon and obtain eternal life, on the ground of just desert in return for his righteous obedience. He was to enter heaven because, in virtue of his good works, he had a claim to eternal life. Hence the necessity of good works. They were the price paid for salvation. I must do them because they are the only coin current on the exchange of heaven.

Such a view of the necessity of good works was destructive of the very life of Christianity; and that in a two-fold way. It destroyed the character of grace, and changed God from a Father, freely pardoning his children, and preparing for them, out of his own resources, a way of redemption, to a spiritual merchant, selling pardon and heaven for a sufficient quantity of righteousness. As Paul has put it: "If by grace, then it is no more of works: other-



wise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace."

As a second and equally disastrous consequence, this view robbed the practice of goodness of its highest value. It degraded holy living from its high rank as the outflow of a spiritual faith in God, the outleap of the heart to the Father of grace and goodness, to be only the stipulated price of a bargained salvation. It has been charged on Christianity, as a grave defect, that it "holds out the hope of heaven and the threat of hell, as the appointed and appropriate motives to a virtuous life; in this falling far beyond the best of the ancients, and doing what lies in it to give to human morality an essentially selfish character."\* The Romish ground of obligation to good works, goes far to justify whatever of truth there is in this charge. "Do good," says the Romish theology, in substance, "that you may be safe." Surely, any teaching that makes holiness, in its naked beauty, less beautiful and venerable in the eyes of men, must be contrary to the mind of God.

The guarded statement of Art. IV., "that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works; but that they are justified gratuitously, for Christ's sake, through faith," was sufficient refutation of the corrupt doctrine of Rome. But the Confessors, like men who having in trust a priceless treasure, make assurance doubly sure, and post triple lines of sentinels about the key of their position, guard against this error by the negative declaration of the doctrine of "good works." Not content with their own decided declaration, they fortify their position with the testimony of Christ, and the authority of the Fathers. They felt themselves called to this apparently redundant defence, the more especially because it had been maintained that, however good works might be excluded from any share in meriting or procuring justification, they were yet necessary to obtaining the rewards of salvation, and for retaining salvation after it had been freely given. The controversies, that fought themselves out, died, and were renewed, about these fine distinctions, were interminable. We may sum up, in the blunt words of Chemnitz, the gist of the whole matter, and remark how the theologians of that period construed and defended the negative side of this Article.

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\*J. Stuart Mill, on Liberty.

"It is not true, as some pretend, that good works, although unnecessary to merit or obtain salvation, are necessary to retain, preserve, and complete our final safety. For the form of apostolic doctrine attributes the preservation and completion of salvation, its middle and end, as well as its beginning, to the grace of God alone, for Christ's sake, without works; which grace is received, retained, and preserved through faith alone. 'By faith we,' not only 'have access into this grace;' but also by faith 'we stand in this grace,' and, by faith, 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' (Rom. v. 2)."\* This, with Quenstedt's felicitous epigram, may suffice for the negative side of this part of our subject: "Good works are not the way *to*, but only ways *in* the kingdom."† To this add one, from Gerhard, even happier: "Good works do not make one good, they only show him to be so."‡

We turn now to the positive side of the ground of obligation. If good works are not necessary to obtain pardon and salvation, on what ground are they necessary? The answer of the Confession to this is clear and final. Its authors do not, after the fashion of much modern reform in theology, demolish the ancient bulwarks of religion to leave those who had trusted in them naked and defenseless. The Romish ground of obligation to good works, viz.: that of their essential merit in the purchase of salvation, though utterly untenable and bad enough in its practical results, was yet better than no ground of obligation at all. It was better to be impelled to right living, with the hope of securing heaven thereby, than to have no impulse at all. It is better now for the millions of the Romish communion to believe that good works must be done to secure salvation, than to believe right living has no real ground of obligation outside of the fantasy and self-imposed yoke of one's own sense of moral fitness. It is better to be an Austria, besotted, yet having some ground of obligation felt by its subjects, than a France, with the false ground removed, but none put in its place.

The Confessors were ready to replace the crazy bulwark which Rome had furnished. "This faith must bring forth good fruits.

\* \* It is our duty to do those good works which God has com-

\* Loci Theologici Chemnitii, Pars III., p. 53.

† Quenstedtii Theolog. Didactico-Polemica, Pars IV., p. 331.

‡ Loci Theolog., J. Gerhard, Vol. VIII., p. 25.

manded, because it is his will." The more we study this simple declaration, the more impregnable will appear their position, the more pregnant the words they use. Why must we do these good works? Because "it is our duty." What obligation to the practice of a holy life? Because "it is the will of God." It will be observed that there are two steps taken in the statement and unfolding of this ground of obligation.

a. "*It is our duty.*" The ground is that of moral right. The force of the original is, if anything, stronger: "*debeat,*" "*oporteat.*" The appeal here is to the ultimate imperative of conscience. We must, because we ought. No idea in human consciousness is more unique than that expressed by the word "ought." It carries us into a realm as new as that into which sight introduces us. Its deliverances are wholly untranslatable into other forms. It emerges into consciousness with a distinction like that of another sense. It makes its deliverances with an authority that, though often opposed, hated, derided, though often traversing the dearest schemes of man's ambition and pleasure, yet has been felt by all men, in their highest moments, to be irresistible and full of the highest inspiration. It has been recognized, to use Lecky's eloquent words, as "constituting at once the evidence of a Divine element within us, and the augury of the future that is before us." But modern speculation has undertaken to resolve this idea into simpler elements. Under the analysis of the subtlest psychology the world has ever seen, the associational philosophy of Bain and Mill, this imperative of conscience resolves itself back into certain natural effects of association. Certain impulses of hope and fear, say these writers, become connected by association with certain prescribed courses of conduct. These associations are transmitted, in continually increasing strength, from generation to generation, till all traces of the connection by which they were formed are lost, and only the residuum of actual tendency is left. This tendency is what we call conscience. What we took for the voice of God is only the vibration of a nerve that goes on recording itself long after the blow that caused it is forgotten. What we respected as the imperative of a moral sense, final and authoritative, is only the recurrence of certain impulses, set in motion in our ancestors far beyond our knowledge.

This is very simple. But is it true? The philosophers seem to have analyzed all the authority of conscience away. But their

analysis steers its airy way through the empty heaven of hypothesis. Their train of argument, like the gossamer thread of the spider that lets itself down out of the clear sky, has no perceptible holding-place. There is not, in all their fine fabric, so solid a fact as the simple testimony of conscience.

Two voices sound from the soul, which no philosophy has ever been able authoritatively to silence or to contradict: "I am," and "I ought." Huxley himself, fiercest and ablest, though frankest, of the materialist school, confesses reluctantly, that, for the first of these declarations, philosophy has no sufficient answer. The testimony of consciousness to its own free, self-determining nature, is final.\* So, too, the testimony of conscience, that we are under a solemn law of obligation to right, that consciousness expressed most tersely and vividly by "I ought," is, at least tacitly, admitted to be irrefutable. In that famous definition, by this same author, of the "liberally educated man," the last crowning touch of completeness is, that his "passions are trained to come to heel, by a vigorous will, *the servant of a tender conscience*." What is this but an unconscious testimony to the authority of the moral sense? Mr. Lecky, who seems, in his "History of European Morals," to make the laws of right as flexible and shifting as the currents of the summer wind, yet testifies, at last, that the "instinctive, or moral nature, is as truly a part of our being, as is our reason," and "teaches us what reason could never teach, the supreme and transcendent excellence of moral good." "In it" (our moral nature), "we have the common root of religion and of ethics; for the same consciousness that tells us that, even when it is in fact the weakest element of our constitution, it is, by right, supreme, commanding and authoritative, teaches us also that it is Divine."†

The very men who anatomize conscience, till there is no soul of force or right left in it, yet finally confess, by the very necessity of their nature, by their avowed indignations and enthusiasms, that the dethroned power, though they have proved it to be no rightful power, still holds a resistless sceptre.

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\* "Does human nature possess any free, volitional, or truly anthropomorphic element, or is it only the cunningest of all Nature's clocks? Some, among whom I count myself, think the battle will forever remain a drawn one, and that, for all practical purposes, this result is as good as anthropomorphism winning the day."—*Lay Sermons, Addresses, etc.*, p. 164.

† Lecky's "History of European Morals," Vol. I., pp. 57, 58.

The Confession thus bases the obligation to right living on a ground of sanction that is, our enemies themselves being judges, ultimate and immovable, as constituting a part of the fundamental law of our nature. "It is our *duty* to do those good works which God has commanded." Of course, where the appeal is to a tribunal whose judgment cannot be re-argued, but is final, there need no links of reasoning to be forged and welded to enforce the authority of the judgment. When conscience speaks finally and decisively, the mind ceases from its quest after a ground of authority. As a matter of fact, the Confessors and the theologians of the formative period of our confessional theology, have practically left their case, so far as this ground of obligation is concerned, to rest here. After affirming that it is our duty to do "good works," they cease from the attempt to show why duty is a sufficient ground of obligation, or to prove, with some modern philosophers, that it is necessary to do what we ought to do.

b. But there is yet another step in the process by which the Reformers established the ground of obligation to good works: "It is our duty to perform those good works which God has commanded, *because it is his will.*" They design by this sanction to point out the source of that moral imperative, which emerges into actual force in the voice of conscience. We are to do good works because it is our duty: "ought," says the moral sense, and that is final. And that moral sense stands over the will and life, as their rightful ruler, whose command may be disobeyed, but never annulled, because it is so constituted by the will of God. The final reason of all right living is, "it is the will of God."

The Reformers were not inclined to make the Confession a place for fine metaphysical disquisition. They had no mind to decide by the use of the term, "will of God," what is the metaphysical ground of right. It is true, we may press their words to their strict logical import, and argue, with at least a verbal show of justice, that they expressed in this term, "because it is the will of God," their settled belief that the ground of right is the ultimate, arbitrary determination of God. But in all fairness, that construction cannot be pressed. They meant, as it appears to me, to affirm only that, *for us*, the final ground and sanction of right is to be found in the discovered will of God. They leave undetermined the query, whether God wills the constitution and nature of right by a sheer exercise of his



almighty and original fiat, or only declares a law already existent in the very nature of things. We come here to that threshing floor of metaphysical subtleties, where Lowell satirically affirms "theologians thresh their wheatless straw."

The native moral sense does not delay its obedience for an answer to the question, Does God will right living because it is right, or is it right because God wills it? In every age of the world, a "Thus saith the Lord" has proved final, so far as the demands of the moral sense are concerned, and an end of all controversy. If there be any reason of right back of God's will and pleasure, it is a reason that the conscience and heart of man, whatever the restless intellect, with its endless inquisition, may demand, never feel the need of.

"The voice of duty is the voice of God."

The elaboration of this simple and final ground of obligation, in the after controversies and dogmatic theologies of the Lutheran Church, adds nothing to its force. They rather weaken it, on the principle that one strong argument and half a dozen weak ones make a feebler impression than the single strong point left to stand alone. Or, rather, on the principle that all attempted proof of a self-evident truth obscures it. The ground of obligation defined in the article is self-evident. It commends itself, at once, to what is deepest and purest in man. "It is our duty:" Every conscience throbs to the call. "Because it is God's will:" That sounds like a finality. It brings us before the high throne, where angels adore and receive the word of command. It fills and satisfies the highest spiritual sense as perfectly as the lowest. To base morality there, is to give it the solidest footing. To found holiness simply on that, is to make its foundation broad and deep as religion itself. No sanction can be more awful than the shadowy and supernatural influences, which this reference to the unseen Lawgiver and Judge of all the earth, gather over the soul. No wooing to goodness can be sweeter than that couched in this simple declaration, "it is the will of God."

We give a few of the ramifications into which the theologians of the development period push out the simple ground of obligation to good works laid down in this Article.

Chemnitz, in answer to the question, "*Propter quas causas facienda sint bona opera?*" tabulates his elaborations as follows:

*"I. With respect to God.*

1. It is his command.
2. It is his wish.
3. That we may be obedient sons of our Father.
4. The Son of God redeemed us to be pure.
5. Good works are the fruits of the Spirit.
6. That God may be glorified through our good works.
7. That we may be imitators of God.
8. That we may walk worthy of God.

*II. With respect to ourselves.*

1. Because the renewed should be new creatures.
2. Because sons of light should not walk in darkness.
3. For a testimony of true faith.
4. That the difference between a dead and living faith may be marked.
5. Lest faith and the Spirit be lost.
6. To escape punishment of this life.
7. To obtain the promised reward.

*III. With respect to our neighbor.*

1. To help him.
2. That we may allure others to piety by our example.
3. That we may give no offence.
4. That by well-doing we may shut the mouths of gainsayers."

These various divisions, which we have given only in brief, and condensed from their original form, are supported by copious proof-texts from the Scriptures.\*

Gerhard gives an amplification much after the same style, which he sums up after this fashion :

1. *Necessity of command*, because God in the Decalogue commands a zeal of good works.
2. *Necessity of debt*, arising from the former, because we owe to God, as our Creator, etc., filial obedience, to our neighbor a zeal of kindness and offices of love.
3. *Necessity of order*, because the order of justice remains perpetual, that the rational creature should obey the Creator.
4. *Necessity of consequence*, because good works continually accompany and follow faith.

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\* *Loci Theologici Chemnitii*, Pars Tertia, pp. 60, 61.

5. *Necessity of hypothesis*, because, unless we would lose faith, the grace of God, etc., we must devote ourselves to good works."

To this necessity, *Melanchthon* joined the *worthiness* and *utility* of good works where, by *worthiness*, is not to be understood any merit of divine grace, etc., nor any *perfection* of good works before the judgment of God, nor *causality* in the matter of justification; but a gratuitous acceptance by God, who considers the obedience of the renewed, that proceeds from faith, to be genuine and pleasing, and affixes to the same gratuitous rewards.

*Hutter* adds two classes, making five :

1. Necessity with respect to God.
2. Necessity with respect to angels.
3. Necessity with respect to our neighbors.
4. Necessity with respect to ourselves.
5. Necessity with respect to devils.

The pious Gerhard remarks naïvely that two of these classes are unnecessary, with which sentiment I think we can heartily agree.

All this elaboration is, practically, so much dead lumber, in any attempt to set this great truth on its firmest basis. The less there is of matter, intermediate to the direct impact of the will of God upon the conscience, the quicker and more tender is the moral sense. Thus we find, in seasons of revival, when the preaching is peculiarly theological (using this term in its technical sense), when less of the motives to duty, and the reasons for holiness, are professedly set forth, but God is held up, his character and will and positive law, the stronger the influence upon the consciences of men. The ideas of God and God's command, laid on the mind, burn their way through to the very quick of conscience, and kindle the most ardent flame of holy practice.

We have to notice the corrective character of this ground of obligation in relation to errors that rose on this subject in later times. These errors we may trace all to a single root, an undervaluation of holiness, as an end in itself. Whatever leads men, theoretically or practically, to regard goodness as a means to an end, rather than an end sufficient in itself, is false to Scripture, and false to the necessities of man's own nature. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. iv. 3). "The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." (1 Tim. i. 5.) This has been effected in two quite

opposite directions: by men very religious, and by men very irreligious.

In the terrible recoil from good works because of the taint they had got whilst serving in the mill at Rome, the Church was in danger of falling into an error quite as pernicious. When men recoil from a bad thing, they generally go into an opposite extreme very nearly as bad.

Accordingly we find, close on the crash of the Reformation, a heresy springing up in the new Church, out of the ashes of the corrupt doctrine of Justification by Works, as we see new growths of another species put forth from the ashes of a burned forest. John Agricola, an early helper of Luther, seized on some extravagant expressions of the great Reformer, with reference to the worthlessness of good works as of saving efficacy,\* and speedily brought forth, as a legitimate consequence of Justification by faith, the doctrine that believers are under no obligation to keep the law or do good works. When, in the "Instruction to the Pastors of the Saxon Electorate" (1527), it was enjoined that "all pastors must teach and enforce diligently the Ten Commandments, and not only the Commandments themselves, but also the penalties which God has affixed to the violation of them," Agricola bitterly assailed Luther and Melanchthon as departing from the true faith of the Gospel, and declared that the Decalogue is not binding on Christians.† He was followed later by Nicolas Amsdorf, and Otto of Nordhausen. Amsdorf, in opposing the errors of one George Major, Professor at Wittenberg, who taught the necessity of good works to salvation, declared that good works were pernicious to salvation. In a more extravagant form still, the Anabaptists, who plagued Luther more than the Papists, scouted the idea that it was wrong for

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\* Luther, in his writings against the Zwickau enthusiasts, says, "These teachers of sin annoy us with Moses; we do not wish to see or hear Moses, for Moses was given to the Jews, not to us Gentiles and Christians, we have our Gospel and New Testament; they wish to make Jews of us through Moses, but they shall not."—*Werke*, Walch's Ed., XX., 203).

Melanchton (*Loci Communes*, 1st Ed., by Augusti, p. 127) declares, that "it must be admitted that the Decalogue is abrogated."

† Among some theses published anonymously at Wittenberg by Agricola, is the following: "Art thou steeped in sin—an adulterer, or a thief? If thou believest, thou art in salvation. All who follow Moses must go to the devil; to the gallows with Moses."

those who believed to indulge their carnal desires, since those who were saved by grace were made free from the law.\*

In England, under the Protectorate of Cromwell, Antinomianism took a still more positive form, as a legitimate fruit of extreme Calvinism. It was taught by Saltmarsh, one of Cromwell's chaplains, and by Dr. Crisp, an ultra-Calvinist, that "the law is tyrannical and cruel, requiring what is naturally impossible;" and that "repentance and confession of sin are not necessary to forgiveness." The same errors manifested themselves again in the eighteenth century, about the time of the Wesleyan revival, when, both in the Established Church and in the Dissenting Churches, the doctrine that believers owe no duty of obedience to the law of God, was carried to its highest pitch of folly. Orme, in his "*Life of Baxter*," pithily characterizes and condemns this fatal error: "So far from regarding the moral cure of human nature as the great object and design of the gospel, Antinomianism does not take it in at all, but as it exists in Christ, and becomes ours by a figure of speech. It regards the grace and the pardon as everything: the spiritual design, or effect, as nothing. Hence its opposition to progressive, and its zeal for imputed, sanctification: the former is intelligible and tangible, but the latter a mere figment of the imagination. \* \* \* It boasts in the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, while it believes in no saint but one, that is Jesus, and neglects to persevere."\* In short, it is the old folly, come to life again, that James once slew when he said, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

A milder, but equally unscriptural and irrational error, was one that Chalmers felt keenly in his own ministry, viz.: that holiness is to be valued "chiefly as an evidence of justifying faith." He says, in a strain the like of which brought the scourge of Scotch Orthodoxy upon his back with stinging force, "it is, in fact, chiefly valuable on *its own account*. It forms part, and an effective part, of salvation. Christ came to give us a justifying righteousness, and he also came to make us holy—not chiefly for the purpose of evidencing here our possession of a justifying righteousness—but for the purpose of forming and fitting us for a blessed eternity."† On the publi-

\*See, for a fuller account of this subject, the excellent article, "Antinomianism," in McClintock and Strong's Cyclopædia, from which I have drawn the material above.

†Hanna's Memoir of Chalmers, Vol. II., p. 191.



cation of his Kilmany Address, in which he exhorted his former parishioners to the practice of goodness, as in itself right and obligatory, because willed by God, he was denounced by the stiff orthodoxy as "a sinner yet to be brought to the knowledge of the truth."\* This in 1815. So tenaciously has the horror of good works, that followed on the recoil from the errors of Rome, clung to the Reformed Churches.†

The error of Antinomianism was, at root, the error of that from which it was the extreme recoil, the error of Rome, putting the matter of pardon and safety so much in the foreground, as to fill all the horizon of the gospel. "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," answered Rome, and so degraded holiness to be merchandise, a spiritual *quid pro quo*. "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," for "we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," said Antinomianism, and so thrust practical holiness out of doors. But the truth is, good works have nothing to do with salvation, one way or the other. We are saved freely by grace, and the obligation to good works is not on the ground of price, but the necessity of right; what theologians call *necessitas justitiæ*. And good works are good, not because they save, or evidence faith, or comfort the believer, or any such thing; but simply because they are a part of the moral perfection of the universe, and according to God's will. If the Antinomians had thought more of pleasing God, and less of saving their souls, they would never have fallen into the mire, on the opposite side of the road from the ditch where Rome lay.

The Confession cut the ground from under all this class of errors, by conceding, at once, that those who are saved by grace are under no legal obligation to do good works, "not in the expectation of thereby meriting justification before him," and then setting forth into the light the incontrovertible truth, that we ought to do God's will, whether we be saved or not. The law of right is eternal

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\* Hanna's Memoir of Chalmers, Vol. II., Appendix A, p. 491.

† For a racy exhibition of the follies with which this suspicion of "good works" has plagued much of Protestant and, more especially, Calvinistic theology, see Henry Ward Beecher's Sermon, "*A Plea for Good Works*,"—Plymouth Pulpit, Vol. V., No. 21.

and immutable, in Heaven and Earth and Hell. "It is our duty to perform those good works which God has commanded," whether we be elect or non-elect, saved or lost, simply "because it is his will." This is the duty of angels, fiends, and men alike, and none the less a ground of obligation though we be no more debtors to the law for salvation. The law expressed in "it is God's will," is not statutory, but fundamental, the constitutional law of God's kingdom, and not to be repealed or set aside.

This is set forth in the decisive testimony of this Article: "*It is our duty, etc.*" It is true there was a period, not yet wholly passed away in all parts of the Lutheran Church, in which a dead orthodoxy made null and void this fundamental teaching of the Confession. In the seventeenth century, when the power of the divine life was stifled and overwhelmed by ecclesiasticism, until it made its way to the light again, in the somewhat distorted but living form of Pietism, this Article was thrust into a corner. But it still stood on the record, a part of the common Confession. And it has not been the least of the fruits of the new development of our Church in this country, that the churches of the General Synod have declared, with a fresher and ever deepening emphasis, "*This faith must bring forth good fruits, and that it is our duty to perform those good works which God has commanded, because it is his will.*" The answer to all Antinomianism, theoretical or practical, is found in these strong words of the Confession, "*it is God's will.*"

We turn to notice the perversion of the truth, concerning the obligation to right living, in another direction—a perversion made by men by no means famed for their religion. Mr. Matthew Arnold, a poet and critic of no mean order, has been preaching, for the last few years, a new gospel, the gospel of culture. "The aim of culture," to use another's words, "is the perfection of our human nature on all its sides, in all its capacities."\* And not only to secure this for our own individual human nature, but also for the sum-total of humanity with which we stand inseparably connected. In words

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\* I have used, in this part of my subject, the thoughts, and sometimes the words, of Principal Shairp, of the United College of St. Salvator and St. Leonard, St. Andrews, whose little book, "Culture and Religion in some of their Relations," I could wish that every minister and moral and spiritual teacher might read and ponder. Nothing sweeter, simpler, or truer has been written on this theme.

borrowed from Bishop Wilson, but made, by his felicitous choice and application, Mr. Arnold's own, its purpose is "to make reason and the kingdom of God prevail." This aim seems coincident with that of religion. But Mr. Arnold and his following teach that religion is only one of many factors to be used in working out the processes of culture. To secure his aim, he would summon to his aid all the help that science, religion, poetry, philosophy and history can afford. Religion, then, is only one of the servants of this new goddess. We are to seek God, not for himself, but for ourselves; a position destructive to the very essence of religion. We are to follow holiness, and practice right living, not as ends of blessedness, and good sufficient in themselves, not "because it is the will of God;" but because we must practice good in order to secure perfection in ourselves. God and goodness are to serve as priests at this new altar of "human perfection." Mr. Arnold and his school would land us, practically, not far from the communion of the Comtists, who are engaged, at present, in the "worship of humanity."

Seek and practice the purest goodness, say the advocates of culture, for, in so doing, you will find an instrument for self-culture. Do good works, for so you will best secure the ends of personal elevation. But we are met here by that well-known law in ethics, which, from his happy expression of it, it has been proposed to call after Dr. Newman: "All virtue and goodness tend to make men powerful in this world; but they who aim at the power have not the virtue. Again: Virtue is its own reward, and brings with it the truest and highest pleasures: but they who cultivate it for the pleasure-sake, are selfish, not religious, and will never gain the pleasure, because they can never have the virtue." Now what more, according to this law, is the ground of obligation to right living, set forth by the culturists, than a refined species of selfishness? If they are selfish, "who cultivate virtue for the pleasure-sake," surely they are no less, who cultivate virtue because virtue brings elevation and breadth of life. If they "who cultivate virtue for the pleasure-sake \* \* will never gain the pleasure, because they can never have the virtue," then surely they who perform good works for the culture-sake, will never have that fine, essential soul of unquestioning obedience to God, without which good works are not good, but bad.

Above all these subtle delusions and by-ways, through which

men propose to allure their unwilling fellows to the practice of goodness, stands the firm unfailing pillar of obligation set up in this Article: "*It is our duty to do those good works which God has commanded, because it is his will.*"

We are to seek God for himself. We are to seek goodness and practice holiness, for his sake, who is goodness itself. This imports into the practice of virtue the one element of life, lacking which all the noble moralities and aspirations of the pagan world withered and trailed fruitless in the dust, the sense of personal allegiance and loyalty to a superior. This makes the command of Christ a living word, springing up into unfailing streams of goodness in the life. It is the command of my Lord and Master. This satisfies not only the conscience clamoring for the right, not only the aspirations that look for a better, even a perfect way, but also the hunger of the heart that cries for love, and nourishes itself by the services of love. Nay, it goes deeper still; it fills and completes that spiritual desire after God, the Adorable, the Father of our spirits, which "thirsteth for God," which "crieth out for the living God; \* \* when shall I come and appear before God?"

Thus, at last, doctrine fuses into doctrine, till the circle of the divine life is complete. Faith and works, instead of standing over against each other in irreconcilable contradiction, melt into each other and embrace. "*This faith must bring forth good fruits.*"

We have completed our imperfect survey of this cardinal truth. We have found the necessity of holy living to be a doctrine of natural reason, as well as of revealed truth. We have shown that New Obedience has its source in the spontaneous outflow of a living faith. We have seen that the true ground of obligation to right living is to be found in the imperative of conscience, not in the meritorious value of good works; and in the will of God, rather than in the excellent results of virtue. Lastly, we have noticed how this ground of obligation corrects the errors of a contemptuous disregard of the works of the law, and of a degradation of holy living to be only the means of self-culture.

The appeal made by this Article, is to the practical life of the believer. It is the Article of the market and the shop, the street and the home. It prescribes the dress that religion shall wear when she goes abroad among men. Faith is a sacred and hidden thing, not to be worn like a jewel on one's cap, but treasured in seclusion.

But "*this faith must bring forth good fruits,*" and so "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." It echoes the preaching of John: "Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance." It reiterates the warning of James: "Faith without works is dead."



# ARTICLE VII.

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## THE CHURCH.

BY J. G. MORRIS, D. D., LL. D.

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"They likewise teach that there always will be one holy Church. But the Church is the congregation of the saints, in which the gospel is correctly taught and the sacraments are properly administered. And for the true unity of the Church, it is sufficient to agree concerning the doctrines of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. Nor is it necessary that the same human traditions, that is, rites and ceremonies instituted by men, should be everywhere observed. As Paul says, 'One body, one Spirit, even as ye are called in hope of your calling; one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,' etc."

FOR a full and complete illustration of what the Confession teaches concerning the Church, the Eighth Article should also be included, for both are inseparably connected. They treat one theme viewed from two different points. The Seventh embraces principally the *internal* side, whilst the other contemplates the Church in her external aspect; and yet not so that either Article *exclusively* considers these different aspects, for the spirit and body of the one living organism of the Church cannot be separated.\*

In illustrating this subject, I shall pursue the train of ideas as laid down by the Confessors, without any other artificial divisions, ex-

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\* The fact is, that for a perfect exposition of the teachings of the Confession on the Church, Arts. VIII. and XXVIII., and then Arts. XII. and XV., and secondarily Arts. XI. and XIII., in connection with the authentic expositions of the Apology, should all be considered, and hence it is simply absurd to expect that anything like full justice should be done to this subject in a lecture of the usual length.

For the fullest bibliography of the Confession most easily accessible to most of our ministers, see Krauth's "Conservative Reformation," p. 200, *seq.*

cept such as may be absolutely necessary. They are natural and logical, and could not be improved.

This Article follows the preceding in regular gospel order. After they have shown that man is justified by faith alone, without works—that this faith is ordinarily attained only through the preaching of the word, and the use of the sacraments—this Article, concerning the Church, now follows very appropriately, for it shows the place where this word is taught and these sacraments administered. It is not enough for the sick man to know by what remedies he may be healed. He must know where they may be found. Besides this, the controversy between the papists and our theologians on this subject was violent. The question was not only, Where was the Church before the Reformation? but especially, What were the marks of the true Church? and these questions Arts. VII. and VIII. abundantly answer.

The first grand point is the undisputed assertion that there will be a *Church* characterized by certain distinctive scriptural marks.

The word *church* (*ἐκκλησία*), in general, means an assembly or congregation, without any regard to the character of the persons composing it. It is even once (Acts xix. 32) applied to a tumultuous mob of rioters. But that the use of the word might be distinguished from its application to the assembly of these disturbers of the public peace, the institution spoken of in the Confession is called the Church or assembly or congregation of God. Acts xx. 28: "Take heed \* \* to feed the Church of God." See also 1 Cor. x. 32; xi. 16, 22; xv. 9; 2 Cor. x; Gal. i. 13; 1 Thess. ii. 14; 2 Thess. i. 4; 1 Tim. iii. 5, 15. In this sense the word is also used of a single congregation of Christians, as a particular place—a local church. Matt. xviii. 17; Acts viii. 1; ix. 31; 1 Cor. i. 2; Col. iv. 16. It is also used as embracing the aggregate of the confessors of Christ upon earth—"Church of God," 1 Cor. x. 32; xi. 22; 1 Tim. iii. 15—"Church of Christ," Matt. xvi. 18; comp. Ephes. i. 22, v. 23, etc.; and sometimes "church" absolutely, 1 Cor. vi. 4; xii. 28; Col. i. 18; Heb. xii. 23. But as heretics may claim membership in the Church, and boast of their privileges for the honor and distinction derived from them, the true Church is here designated as the Church of the saints, 1 Cor. xiv. 33, in opposition to what the Psalmist, xxvi. 5, calls the "congregation of evil-doers," and Rev. ii. 9, "the synagogue of Satan."

That institution, then, which consists of a number of persons wherever they may live, professing certain specific religious doctrines taught in the Scriptures, who are governed by divinely established laws, acknowledging one supreme divine head, practicing certain rites and ceremonies not necessarily everywhere the same, cultivating mutual good will and harmony, aiming to promote the glory of their invisible but ever-present Head—that institution is a Church or congregation of saints, which the Confessors declare shall and must continue forever.

But the Confession proceeds to specify some important peculiarities of this institution, by which it is distinguished from all other assemblies or congregations in the world. It has certain broad and deeply marked features, by which any man can tell its origin, design, destiny, and the presumed character of its members, thus making a wide distinction between it and any other association established upon earth.

It is a *holy* Church—a congregation that is to be separate from sinners—which exercises itself in holiness, that conforms its life to the faith and commands of God; “a chosen generation, zealous of good works.” 1 Pet. ii. 9. Her God is holy who gathers her; her Saviour, to whom she is betrothed, is holy; the Spirit, who enlightens and rules her, is holy; the means of grace she employs are holy; the service she renders to the Lord is holy. Her exalted Head is holy. Heb. vii. 26. He makes her the participant of his holiness. John xvii. 19. She is called with a holy calling and separate from the world. 2 Tim. i. 19. The word of God entrusted to her is holy. Rom. iii. 2.

It is a *Christian* Church. (*German copy*.) Christ is the Head of the Church, Col. i. 18; Ephes. i. 22. It is the kingdom which he governs, and he has not committed or transferred his sovereignty to another. This Church professes the doctrines of Christ, Ephes. ii. 20; it is built upon the foundation of Christ and the apostles—Christ bought the Church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 9.

The Church is the body of Christ, Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 27. See this figure beautifully illustrated in 1 Cor. xii. 7, *seq.*

She is called the sheepfold of Christ, John x. 1, 27, 28, and the spouse of Christ, John iii. 29; 2 Cor. xi. 2; Rev. xxi. 9.

It is not a *Jewish* Church, for Christ calls it “my Church,” Matt. xvi. 18. Paul (Rom. xvi. 16) says, “the churches of Christ salute you.”

It is not a *Mohammedan* church, "for that is a synagogue of Satan," from which the "Church of Christ" is to "separate herself."

It is not a *national* or *local* church, for it is destined to be universal—"the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God," and "of his kingdom there shall be no end." It is composed of people in every region of the earth, and in different periods, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, there has been, and always will be, an assembly of believers.

There must be *one* and only one Church, because she is brought by one God, through one baptism, into one mystical body under one head; she is ruled by one Spirit and compacted in the unity of faith, hope and love. (Eph. iv. 15.) She professes one faith, and is called by one calling to one celestial inheritance. She does not recognize several assemblies of the same species existing simultaneously, for the Church is the one assembly of all believers united to their Head by faith; she does not recognize any successive Church, for the whole never perished, nor will ever perish, but has endured from the beginning, by a perpetual succession of believers, down to our times, and will endure perpetually; for Christ is the eternal King, and the Church is his ever continuing spouse. He will always gather to himself out of the human family an assembly of saints, whom he will cherish, love and defend as his spouse, Matt. xvi. 18; Luke i. 33; 1 Tim. iii. 15.

The Church shall continue forever. "There always *will be* one holy Christian Church." "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18. In this phrase of the Confession the very close connection between the Church *militant* on earth, and the Church *triumphant* in heaven, is set forth, Gal. iv. 26; Heb. xii. 23; xiii. 14; Phil. iii. 20; and the vocation or business of the first to gather souls to the end of time for the perfected congregation of Christ in the life to come, is impressively indicated; see Matt. xxiv. 14; Acts i. 7, 8. These words intimate "that however furious the assaults of the powers of hell may be here below, they will never be able to overthrow neither the Church of Christ nor even one single true foundation stone; never, as surely as he who spoke that word, Matt. xvi. 18, was not a *fanatic*, but a *Son of the living God*."\*

Our theologians have given this Church several other distinguishing characteristics.

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\* Tholuck's Sermons, p. 121.



She is called *catholic*, in order, as the Apology, IV. says, to prevent any one from thinking that the Church is an external polity or government of certain nations, confined to any particular country, kingdom or state, as Rome would have it, but \* \* the true Church consists of those persons scattered all over the world, who sincerely believe in Christ, who have one Gospel, one Christ, one baptism and one holy Supper; who are ruled by one Spirit, even if they observe dissimilar ceremonies." She is called *catholic* (καθόλου, according to the whole or universal) because she professes that faith which the true or universal Church all over the world has always professed. She is not like the Old Testament Church, consisting exclusively of a particular nation, confined to a particular territory, but is composed of believers of all nations in all the world.

She is called *apostolic*, partly because she was planted by the apostles, and partly because she embraces the doctrine of salvation delivered by the apostles and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Ephes. ii. xx.\*

She is called the Church *militant*, because under the banner of Christ she yet fights against Satan, the world and the flesh in this life.

She is called the Church *triumphant*, because, transferred to her heavenly rest, she will be free from the labor of fighting and the peril of succumbing, and will triumph in heaven over the powers opposed to her, Rev. ii. 10; iv. 4; vi. 12.

Our theologians also say that a *pure* or *true* Church is that congregation or society of men in which all things necessary to be believed in order to salvation, and to be done in order to holiness of life, are taught from the word of God without any admixture of hurtful errors, in which the sacraments are administered according to the institution of Christ, and thus spiritual children of God are begotten who are joined by this true faith to Christ, the Head, and constitute one body in him.

A *false* or *corrupt* church is that society of men in which are taught the doctrines of faith from the word of God, but mixed with

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\* None of the four predicates of which Rome proudly boasts as peculiar to her Church, fail in our Confession; neither the *unity*, nor *sanctity*, nor *catholicity*, nor *apostolicity*. In the first two, which alone the Augustana expressly mentions, the others are included; but Rome uses these four predicates in quite another and erroneous sense, which my limits will not permit me to explain.



false and corrupting errors, and in which the sacraments are indeed administered, but not in the way nor with the end in view for which they were instituted by Christ.

They charitably add that by this is not meant that no one in such a church may be saved, for the word of God is still preached in it, and they propose this syllogism: In whatever church the word of God is publicly preached and the sacraments administered in a way substantially correct, in it spiritual sons and heirs of eternal life may be born; but in certain corrupt churches, such as the Roman and Greek, the word of God is publicly preached, therefore, in them, men may be converted and saved.

The phrase "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*," is recognized by our Church, but it does not precisely exclude the members of other ecclesiastical communions from the hope of salvation, because men may be regenerated in such communions. Hence it is not understood by us as it is by the Church of Rome, which theologically denies salvation to all who belong to other communions. By this phrase, our Church means only that he who desires to be certain of his salvation must belong to the assembly of the saints, which is composed of believers all over the world. Our theologians express it thus: It is necessary that every one who would be saved should be a living member and true citizen of the catholic and apostolical Church, and those who are without the Church are aliens from God, from Christ and the benefits of the heavenly kingdom and the hope of eternal life; and this position they found upon Ephes. ii. 12, 13; iv. 16; v. 8; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rev. xxii. 15; xxi. 8. The peculiar and appropriate benefits of the Church, such as regeneration, conversion, etc., are not to be obtained outside of the Church, therefore there is no salvation out of the Church. Hence, by us, the phrase is reduced simply to this, that no one will be saved who does not believe.

When the Article affirms that there must and always will be one, holy, Christian Church, we must distinguish between the merely external congregation assembled for the purpose of public worship, and the Church in and for herself.

This external and visible existence of a worshipping congregation is not essential to the existence of the Church, for in times of persecution, the assembling together of the saints could not take place, as for instance in the time of Elijah, 1 Kings xix.; the time of the Babylonish captivity, Ps. cxxxvii.; at the time of the death of

Christ, John xx. 19, and at various other periods in the history of the Church in more recent times. The true Church still exists, though in some places and times her enemies may prevent her people from assembling for worship.

The Article defines the Church to be a congregation of all saints or believers. This celebrated definition, it must be observed, refers specially to the Church in her *internal* character or her *ideal* existence. It is essentially the Church in the strict sense of the word (*ecclesia stricte dicta*, in opposition to *ecclesia late dicta*; comp. Art. VIII.) Quamquam eccles. *proprie* sit congreg. sanctorum), the Church as a communion of true Christians, genuine children of God in Christ, that is here described.

It is a congregation, and hence does not consist of one or two, or several, but of many, and, hence, called "the *people of God*."

It is a congregation not according to the flesh—a mere collection of persons—but a congregation according to the Spirit, not at one place, but in all places, in all sections of the world, Ps. l. 1; John iv. 21; 1 Tim. ii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 1.

It is a congregation of all believers, for all who believe in Christ constitute one body, of whom Christ is the Head and all of whom receive the same spirit, power and life. Ephes. i. 23; iv. 4.

The internal and essential form of the Church consists in the spiritual union of all true believers who, as members of the Church, are bound together among themselves with Christ the Head by a true and living faith, which begets a communion of mutual love, John i. 12; xiii. 33; Gal. iii. 27; 1 Cor. vi. 17.

"We therefore conclude," says the Apology, "according to the Holy Scriptures, that the true Christian Church consists of those persons throughout the world who believe the gospel of Christ and have the Holy Spirit in their hearts; and yet we acknowledge also that in this state of earthly existence there are associated with true Christians many hypocrites and wicked persons, who are also members of the Church, in so far as it concerns the external signs."

The Scriptural proofs that the Church is the congregation of saints are numerous. She is called the mystical body of Christ, Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 27; Ephes. i. 23; Col. i. 18; the Church is the mother of believers, Gal. iv. 26; the sons of God, John i. 12; iii. 6; she is led by the Spirit of God, Rom. viii. 14; her children are the "heirs of Christ," Rom. viii. 17; the sheepfold of

Christ, John x. 1, 27, 28; one flesh with Christ, Ephes. v. 30; the house of the living God, 1 Tim. iii. 15; a spiritual house, 1 Pet. ii. 5; none but living stones built upon the corner-stone, Jesus Christ, belong to her, Ephes. ii. 20. None of these qualities are applicable to unbelievers.

This, then, is the character of the Church in its strictest sense, that is, the congregation of believers exclusively. There is a wider sense in which the word must be used, and it embraces the congregation of "the called," in which all who by outward profession assemble for the hearing of the word and the enjoyment of the sacraments, are regarded as members. These must be distinguished from those who not only outwardly profess the faith, but are endowed with true faith of heart and the Spirit of regeneration. The following passages refer to the Church in its broad sense: Acts xx. 28; 1 Cor. xii. 28; xiv. 4, 23. The following in its stricter sense: Matt. xvi. 18; Ephes. i. 22, 23; v. 23-26; 1 Tim. iii. 15. As John Gerhard says: "The former are the true and living members of the Church, who draw life and spirit from Christ the Head; the latter are decayed and dying members: the former belong to the Church internally; the latter, outwardly: the former by an internal and spiritual connection with Christ; the latter by habit, profession, or association: the former in heart, the latter in word: those by the judgment and decision of God, these by the judgment and decision of men: those, with soul and body equally, these, with the body alone: those as sound and wholesome parts of the body, these as sores and bad humors of the body."

We do not say, there are two churches, one the true and internal, and the other nominal and external, but we affirm that there is only one and the same Church, and that the whole congregation of "the called" are to be viewed in a double sense: *internal* and *external*; the *external* consisting of those "called" and associating in a profession of the faith and use of the sacraments, and the *internal* consisting equally of those professing the faith and enjoying the sacraments, but at the same time, and in addition, enjoying the grace of regeneration and an internal association in the bond of the Spirit.

We grant that hypocrites and unholy persons belong to the Church in the sense of the first, but, in respect to the last, we contend that believers or saints alone are members of it. To this let us add what the Apology says: "We admit that hypocrites and wicked persons

may also be members of the Church in outward community of name and office, \* \* \* for Paul prophesied that Antichrist would sit in the temple of God and reign in the Church. \* \* \* The bad are in the Church only by name, not by practice; but the pious are in it both by name and practice."

This difference has given rise to the terms *visible* and *invisible*. The *visible* Church is represented by all who belong to the external Church without any regard to their moral character, hence, embracing the pious and unbelieving, the elect and the reprobate. The *invisible* Church embraces, of course, those who belong to the visible Church, but who are distinguished from the unbelieving and the reprobate by a possession of the true faith and the spirit of God dwelling in their hearts. The former are seen and known of all men; the latter, though seen of men, yet known as members of the true Church only to God. We may believe them to be true Christians, but whether they are really so, is a fact concealed from us, that is, *invisible*, Rom. xi. 28; 2 Kings xix. 10; Rom. xi. 3; Heb. xi. 1.

These terms *visible* and *invisible* are not used in the Symbolical Books, nor by our earlier theologians—they were first used by Zwingli—but the same idea is expressed in the Apology:

"The Church does not, however, consist," says the Apology, "only in a system of external things and rites, but chiefly in an internal communion of heavenly graces, such as the blessings of the Holy Spirit, faith and the love of God," and this Church is called the body of Christ, which he renews, sanctifies and governs by his Spirit. Although wicked hypocrites have fellowship with the true Church, according to external name and office, yet when the Church is strictly defined, we must affirm that it consists of those who are the body of Christ, which is in name and fact the Church.

The "preaching of the Gospel in its purity and the administration of the sacraments according to the Gospel," are regarded by the Confessors as distinguishing marks of the true Church.

The preaching of the Gospel was one of the grand institutions which the Reformation re-established. It had fallen into disuse for some centuries before that period, and even now is regarded as of secondary importance in the public service of the Church of Rome.

But these, in and of themselves, are not marks of the true Church of the elect, for in all churches in which the Gospel is preached in its purity, and the sacraments rightly administered, there are still



some unbelievers or unconverted men ; which was the case even in apostolic times, as the New Testament abundantly shows, Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8, and still it is true that where these marks are visible there the true Church exists, for there are always some who are faithful to Christ ; they are of one mind with Christ, and are members of the true Church, because the proper preaching of the word, and the right use of the sacraments, will always produce their legitimate fruits, 2 Tim. ii. 19 ; Is. lv. 10 *seq.* ; Mark xvi. 15 ; John vi. 31.

Our theologians are very exact in their definitions on this part of the Article. I quoted one or two under the head of a "pure and corrupt church," and I will here quote still further from Gerhard: "By the word of God and the use of the sacraments, the Church is exhibited, collected, nourished and preserved. There the word and use of the sacraments are the proper, genuine and infallible marks of the Church, and, consequently, where they are pure the Church is pure."

When the pure preaching of the word is set forth as a mark of the true Church, the word *preaching* is used in a general sense for the common profession of the doctrine by all the members, pastors and hearers, and for the public reading of the Scriptures in the Church, which also is a species of preaching, Acts xv. 21. The purity or impurity of the doctrine must be recognized from the symbols and public confessions set forth in the name of the whole Church, and not from the opinions or writings of any individual theologian. Hollaz says very properly, "that preaching by the pastor as his own appropriate act or duty is not absolutely necessary to the existence of the Church, as the times of several persecutions show, in which, by the reading of the Scriptures alone, without the public preaching of the pure doctrine, the Church was preserved."

The whole meaning of the phrase "among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity," is apparent, when it is remembered that in the early Reformation times it was held to consist principally of a scriptural representation of the doctrine of justification by faith. That was the right preaching of the Gospel then, and it is so now. Where that doctrine is held forth in its scriptural purity, all other fundamental doctrines will be maintained with equal scriptural correctness.

By the "scriptural administration of the sacraments" was meant the rejection of all superadded sacraments of the Church of Rome, as



well as of her unscriptural ceremonies associated with the administration of the two Gospel sacraments—the denial of the cup to the laity, and the other Romish inventions. There is no allusion to any specific mode or form of administration, nor is any recommended. These modes have varied always, but the idea, design and purpose of them are to be maintained, whatever may be the outward mode of administration.

Those who would change what the universal Church has decreed as essential to their design, such as the substitution of other elements than water in baptism, and bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, separate themselves from the true Church of Christ, 2 Thess. ii. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 23.

It must also be observed here, that when the Confession lays down these points, it includes not only the pure outward preaching of the gospel, and the right exhibition of the sacraments, but their *believing acceptance* also, which means nothing more than heartily believing and conscientiously living as a Christian, if a man wishes to be regarded as a true member of the universal Christian Church.

Finally, the Article teaches “that for the true unity of the Church, it is not necessary that uniform ceremonies instituted by men should be everywhere observed,” Matt. xxviii. 20; Luke xvii. 20; Col. ii. 16, 20, 21; Rom. xiv. 17.

Now, although uniformity in church service is desirable, yet the Confessors were compelled to take this ground against Rome. They adopt everything plainly scriptural, and whilst they admit that some human rites and ceremonies may be edifying, yet they do not regard them as essential to the unity or purity of the Church. The Apology, IV., says: “We assert that those constitute one Church who believe in one Christ, and have one gospel, one faith, and the same sacraments. \* \* To maintain this harmony then, we say, it is not necessary that human ordinances, whether they be universal or special, should be everywhere the same.\*

The subject of “The Church” has, in our times, assumed a vast importance. Which of the various branches of those who profess Christianity is the *true Church*? which exhibits the marks of the true Church most prominently? I unhesitatingly reply, Our own: but in this reply, I do not assume the presumptuous and unscrip-

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\* For a full discussion of this subject, see Apology, ch. IV., Of the Church.

tural position, that our *ministry* only is authorized to preach, administer the sacraments, and govern the Church, as is maintained by some others not belonging to the Church of Rome. This question, and not a few others growing out of it, familiar to theologians, naturally belong to the general subject, and should be discussed in a treatise upon The Church, but I have preferred to illustrate the Article in its general character as set forth in Article VII. The other aspects of it more properly belong to Article VIII., which I hereby hand over to my successor, wishing him all success, and trusting that he will laboriously and thoroughly investigate the subject. .

## ARTICLE VIII.

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# THE CHURCH AS IT IS.

BY H. ZIEGLER, D. D.

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“Although the Church is properly a congregation of saints and true believers; yet, as in this life, many hypocrites and wicked men are mingled with them, it is lawful for us also to receive the sacraments, though administered by bad men, agreeably to the declaration of our Saviour, that ‘the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat,’ &c. And on account of the appointment and command of Christ, both the word and the sacraments are efficacious, even when administered by wicked men.”

“They condemn the Donatists and such like, who denied that it is lawful to make use of the ministry of wicked men in the Church, and who hold that the ministry of such is useless and without efficacy.”

TO a correct understanding of the specific parts of any document, it is necessary to examine the occasion of its origin as a whole, and as to its several parts, and also its design, its contextual relations and its subject-matter. We will introduce specifically, however, only two of these topics: whatever of the others is necessary to our object, will be introduced in connection with these.

### THE CONTEXTUAL RELATIONS OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION AS A WHOLE, TO THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH ARTICLES.

From a careful examination of Arts. I, II, III, IV and XX; V and XVIII; IX, X, XII, XX and XXIV; VII and XII; XIV and XXVIII; and XXV, of the Confession, we have the following relation of dogmas—The Triune God, as creator and preserver of all things; man fallen, exposed to the eternal wrath of God; deliverance from this wrath, by the new birth; this new birth, wrought by the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit, operating through the means of grace; the means of grace, efficacious only through faith in Christ; this

faith, produced by the use of the means of grace; these means of grace, intrusted to the guardianship of the Church; and the Church, exercising this guardianship through her ministry.

We may sum up this relation of dogmas still more briefly, thus—God, the agent in man's salvation; man fallen, the subject of salvation; the word of God and the sacraments, the means of salvation; the Church, the instrumentality through which God renders these means efficacious to man's salvation. In short, the Church is God's chosen instrumentality through which alone he designs to render efficacious the means which he has ordained for man's salvation. A divine revelation, with all its divinely appointed institutions, would avail little towards securing our salvation, unless they resulted in the organization of the Church; and then, not unless intrusted to the Church for self-improvement, for safe-keeping, for faithful administration, and for pure transmission.

Returning now to our relation of dogmas, we remark, that the last two are implied in the language of the Seventh and Eighth Articles, namely—"Among whom the gospel is preached in its purity, and the holy sacraments are administered, according to the gospel;" and "the sacraments and word are efficacious, on account of the institution and command of Christ, although they are administered by wicked men."

#### THE SPECIAL DESIGN OF THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH ARTICLES.

In the New Testament we find two classes of texts descriptive of the Church, sometimes apparently in conflict with each other, and yet constituting a harmonious whole—the one being ideal, and embodying the elements of her essential nature, the other being empirical, and embodying the phenomena manifested in her progressive development. Of the former, we have Eph. v. 25–27, and 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. According to these texts, Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish; and St. Paul prays for the members of the Church, that God might sanctify them wholly, and that their whole spirit, and soul, and body, might be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of the latter, we have 1 Cor. i. 2, and iii. 1–23, and v. 1–13; Gal. i. 2,

and i. 6, 7, and iii. 1-29. In these texts St. Paul represents the members of the Church at Corinth as being not spiritual but carnal, and babes in Christ, as not being able to bear strong meat, as tolerating among them envying, and strife, and divisions, and even fornication; and those of the churches of Galatia, as having already renounced the grace of Christ for another gospel, and as being bewitched so as not to obey the truth.

The adoption of either of these descriptions exclusive of the other, would give a very one-sided conception of the Church, and necessarily lead to many and fatal errors. Indeed, this would be the result, even when the two descriptions were not properly understood in their inseparable relations to one another. The exclusive adoption of the ideal must lead to the Donatistic fanaticism, or to indifference for all church organizations, whilst the empirical alone would encourage corruption and formalism.

The historico-empirical existence of the Church as an external, visible manifestation, and thus distinguished from its essential ideal, was the Roman Catholic conception of the Church. With this historico-empirical conception was soon connected the opinion that the unity of the Church was represented in the bishops, and that without submission to them no one could belong to this unity, or one Catholic Church. Upon this, again, was engrafted the supremacy of the bishops of Rome, and, finally, the supremacy of the Pope over all bishops, over all Councils and powers, spiritual and secular. Thus the Church was held to be the congregation of the faithful throughout the whole world, united under one invisible Head, Jesus Christ, but also under one visible head, the vicar of Christ, the pope of Rome. The visible head was then held as having full power to ordain laws, regulate all forms of worship, sit in judgment on the word of God, etc. Again, their idea of the faithful is absolute, implicit submission to the pope in all things; and that those who do not thus submit do not belong to the one universal Church.

This is strongly expressed in Bellarmine's treatise on the Church: "We hold that the Church is only one, not two, and that this one and true Church is the body of men which is bound together by the profession of the same faith and the communion of the same sacraments, under the government of legitimate pastors, and especially of the one vicar of Christ upon earth, the Roman pontiff. From this



definition, it is easy to determine who belong to the Church, and who do not."

After stating that this definition consists of three parts, and also what persons are excluded by the first and second, he adds: "By the third are excluded schismatics who have faith and the sacraments, but are not subject to the legitimate pastor, and who, therefore, profess faith and partake of the sacraments outside of the Church. But all others are included in this definition, although they are reprobates, wicked, and ungodly."\*

Holding this conception of the Church, the Catholics denied the Reformers the right to be called a Church, because, in their opinion, they had separated themselves as a party from the bosom of the universal Church, and had thus departed from the idea of the Church as it was developed in her progressive history. To this exclusive empirical conception of the Church, the Reformers objected; and to show the injustice of this refusal, and to maintain their right to be called a Church, they took hold of the essential principle as found in the New Testament, and embodied in the Apostles' Creed, namely, "the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints." This they set forth in Article VII. of the Augsburg Confession. It opposes the Romish error, that the Church is only visible under the one vicar of Christ, the pope of Rome. It gives a definition of the ideal Church, the *ecclesia stricte dicta*: that is, as Christ her Head and his apostles delineated her and designed she should be in her complete development—a congregation of believers and saints, of holy persons, made such by faith, and who hold and dispense a pure gospel and pure sacraments, and who are all bound together in one inseparable communion throughout the world, and through all time, by this gospel and these sacraments, and not by the same ordinances of human appointment. But an organized society consisting exclusively of saints, has never existed in the world. The definition of the Church in the Seventh Article, so far as it relates to its essential element, does not, therefore, describe the Church as she has been at any time as an organized society, but what she is in her inner, essential nature, and what she must aim to become in her complete development. In short: it is the New Testament ideal of the Church—the inner essence and the outer manifestation in its organized form, in harmony with one another.

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\* Winer's Darstellung des Lehrbegriffs der Vers. Chrst. Kirchenparteien, pp. 167, 168. Hag. Hist. Doctrines, Vol. II., pp. 291, 292.

That the Confessors thus used the term. "*Congregatio sanctorum*," is evident from the fact, that in the German copy of the Confession they employ the phraseology, "*die Versammlung aller Gläubigen*;" and also, from the use of both terms, *saints* and *believers*, in both the German and Latin texts of the Eighth Article, and from their accompanying adjuncts, namely, "although the Church is properly nothing else than the congregation of saints and true believers, yet, since in this life there are many hypocrites and wicked persons mixed with them," etc.

This definition of the Church in the Seventh Article, taken strictly, as consisting only of saints and true believers, would consequently exclude all religious societies from the Church, even the Confessors themselves. Therefore, to avoid a one-sidedness on their part, with its concomitant errors, and to show more fully also that they speak here of the *ecclesia stricte dicta*, or the ideal Church, and that they have a broader conception of the Church in her progressive development, they give us in the Eighth Article an empirical description of the Church—*ecclesia late dicta*.

Our further discussion will be embraced in the following theses :

#### I. THESIS.

*The Church consists Properly of True Believers or Saints ; and as such is also an External, Visible Organization.*

The Augustana employs the terms, saints and believers, as equivalent. In Art. VII., the German text employs the term *believers*, whilst in the Latin, we have *saints*. In Art. VIII., the two terms are used in both texts.

Saints and believers imply each other, for saints are such by a true faith. This faith first procures our justification, and, secondly, through it, the Holy Spirit sanctifies us. The Holy Spirit, then, makes us saints through the medium of our faith. These saints, made such by the Holy Spirit, operating and communicating divine light and life through the word as the objective means, and through faith as the subjective means, are the living members of the true Church—they constitute the true Church in her inner essence—and as such, they are the congregation of saints or true believers. As these are scattered throughout the world, they constitute the Church Catholic. This Catholic Church is, again, "the communion of

saints," because all true saints stand in fellowship with Christ and one another.\* This Catholic Church, as the communion of saints, is also called the body of Christ, because it is united to Christ and receives spiritual life from him as its Head. It is once more designated the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of God, because the Church is the kingdom of God established by Christ on earth, and also, because Christ rules it by his word, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This is properly the true Church, in her internal, spiritual, invisible essence. In the Apology, it is described in the following language. The Church is a spiritual people, the true people of God, enlightened in their hearts, and born anew by the Holy Spirit. It consists mainly in the internal communion of heavenly gifts in the heart, as the Holy Spirit, faith, and the fear and love of God. It is the kingdom of Christ distinguished from the kingdom of Satan. Those in whom Christ effects nothing by his Spirit, are not members of the Church. The Church consists of all those, throughout the world, who truly know Christ and the gospel, who have the Holy Spirit, and who properly confess the truth.

But whilst this internal, spiritual essence properly constitutes the Church, and whilst, as such, it would be not merely invisible, but wholly supersensuous, it has, nevertheless, also an outer and sensuous side, a visible organization.

The following language in which the Apology refers to the Church, recognizes its external, visible organization. It is an outward government—the ungodly and hypocrites have fellowship with the true Church in external signs of name and office—the ungodly are in this life among true Christians, and in the Church as teachers and other officers.

Luther's criteria of the Church also recognize its visible organization. These are the word of God and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, expounded, believed and observed; the ex-

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\*Luther regards the clause, "the communion of saints," in the Apostles' Creed as an explanation of the preceding clause, "the Holy Catholic Church," that is, as an explanation of what the Church is. In his Larger Catechism he says: "The meaning of this clause is briefly this—I believe there is a holy body and congregation on earth, consisting purely of saints, called together by the Holy Ghost under one Head, Christ." He says, the word, *communio*, should be rendered, not fellowship, but a congregation.

ercise of the office of the keys; the calling and consecration of church officers, and the service of public worship.\*

Again: although the Seventh and Eighth Articles of the Confession present the inner, spiritual side, as the fundamental constituent of the Church, they, nevertheless, both also recognize her visible organization; for the Church has the gospel preached and the sacraments administered, and also observes ceremonies instituted by men.†

The Roman Catholic Church starts with the outer, visible organization, and which she regards as the essence of the Church, to find her inner complement; the Lutheran, on the contrary, starts with the inner essence, and from it develops the outer organization.‡

That the Lutheran view, as set over against the Roman Catholic, is correct, may be thus argued. The Lutheran view harmonizes with all the works of God. The present universe was not first, and then from it the development of first principles; but the contrary. In the elementary atoms constituting the elementary substances which compose all bodies, we find the laws requisite and adequate to the development of the present order of things. Besides, in this development, the process always was from lower to higher forms, orders and faculties, commencing with inorganic matter and proceeding up through the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and all finally destined, as one coherent universe, to contribute to the elevation of man to his high moral destiny. Thus has God brought forth the earth and its inhabitants by commencing with elementary principles. The full-grown tree is not first—it is developed from a seed, which also contains its elementary and essential principles. The same is true of all nature. God's procedure in regard to the Church is the same. Our first parents were the first church, constituted such after the fall, by faith in the gospel—the gospel in its true essence—promulgated by God himself in the first promise of the world's Redeemer, the Destroyer of sin and Satan. *There* already, we see fallen man; *there* was the gospel; *there* was the

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\* Luther's Werke, Hal., Tom. XVI., 2784 ff.

† For Prof. Harnack's views on this point, see Evan. Rev., Vol. XIII., No. 49, pp. 126-129.

‡ See this more fully discussed by Guericke, Ev. Review, Vol. V., No. 1, pp. 17-27.



Redeemer; *there* was faith; *there* was pardon; and *there* was the Church, in its essential essence first, and afterwards its external organization was gradually developed and completed.

## II. THESIS.

*The Church, therefore, consists essentially and necessarily of Two Inseparable Constituents—the inner, spiritual, invisible Essence and the outer, visible Organization, as her Empirical Development.*

The inner essence, as seen in thesis first, is the soul regenerated by the Holy Spirit through the truth, apprehended by faith, and thus brought into cheerful submission and willing obedience to Christ, and animated by the precious hopes of the gospel. This essence is spiritual, because it is seated in our rational and spiritual nature, and is begotten and nourished by spiritual agencies. It is invisible, not in its outward manifestation, but in its spiritual essence.

The outer manifestation is the organization of those who possess the inner, spiritual essence, into a society for the attainment of their mutual edification, and for their harmonious and efficient co-operation for the world's conversion. It is visible because of its formal organization and its employment of sensible means for the attainment of its ends; and herein it must have a progressive development. This constitutes its empirical character.

These two, the inner and the outer, are inseparable constituents. Hagenbach remarks: "As every manifestation which is the result of a life-power, has two sides, so also has the Church her outer or bodily, and her inner or spiritual side, and which cannot be separated from one another; nevertheless, up to a certain point these may be considered separately, and with the greater attention."\* This same inner side, according to Luthardt, as the true, hidden Church, constitutes the germ of all individual, visible churches; and, again, the visible Church is the dispenser of the means of grace, is a necessary part of the Church on earth; and in it alone can we find and comprehend the Church in her essential nature. Again he says: the Church, including her two sides, is neither alone visible nor invisible, but is both at the same time.†

\* Ency. u. Meth., 5th Edit., §64, p. 197.

† Ev. Rev., Jan., 1873, pp. 55-69.



Hollaz, speaking of the relation of the visible to the invisible Church, says; "We do not maintain that the visible and the invisible Church are two churches of different species, or of contrary opposition, but we call the visible and the invisible one and the same Church in different respects: visible, in respect of the called; invisible, in respect of the renewed—which must be regarded as different modes, neither constituting different species, nor causing contrary opposition, because the invisible body of the renewed are included in the visible body of the called."\*

Guericke, on this point, says: "Hence the Church, in Luther's Confession of Faith, is called the spiritual body of Christ. This spiritual essence, however, must, in order to view the complete Church, reveal itself in an outward, bodily form, in a common confession of faith, verbal and sacramental."†

Melancthon, in his *Loci*, says: "As often as we think of the Church, we contemplate the assembly of those who have been called, which is the visible church; nor do we dream that any of the elect are elsewhere than in this visible church, for God will not be invoked nor acknowledged otherwise than as he reveals himself, nor does he reveal himself, except in the visible church, in which alone the voice of the Gospel sounds, nor do we feign another church, invisible and silent."‡

The truth is—all who constitute the inner, invisible essence of the Church, also constitute her true external complement, or organized congregation; and as thus organized, the Church can not be otherwise than visible.

That the Church consists necessarily of these two inseparable elements, may be argued from the means of her production and edification, and from her design. The former are the word of God, including the sacraments, and its whole system of doctrines, duties, and government, and faith uniting to Christ, and working by love. The former has been, and could be, received, guarded, faithfully transmitted, and properly administered, only by truly regenerated souls, and by them, only in an associated and organized capacity. The system of doctrines, etc., especially when considered in con-

\* Hutt. Red., 8th Edit., pp. 324, 325.

† Ev. Rev., vol. v., No. 1, p. 19.

‡ Quoted by Guericke, Ev. Rev., vol. v., No. 1, p. 25.

nection with the design of the Church, again, constrains all truly regenerated souls to consecrate themselves in organized co-operation with each other, for their mutual edification and for the world's conversion. Here, then, we have the Church, consisting necessarily and essentially of her two inseparable elements—the inner and the outer, the invisible and the visible.

### III. THESIS.

*The Church is the only Trustee and Steward of the Means of Grace.*

The Church has originally received the means of grace, and to her they have been intrusted as a sacred deposit for safe-keeping; and in this sense, she is, as forcibly expressed in German, "*die Inhaberin der Gnadenmittel.*" Again: She is bound to dispense these means for the edification of all her members, and for the conversion of the outside world, and also to transmit them unadulterated to all coming ages. To express this, German theologians aptly employ, "*die Trägerinn der Gnadenmittel.*"

To cover the ground of both these German technicalities, I employ, in this thesis, the terms Trustee and Steward.

Both the Seventh and Eighth Articles imply this thesis, in the words—"among whom the gospel is preached in its purity," etc.; and also, "both the word and the sacraments are efficacious," etc.

As the trustee and steward of the means of grace, the Church is, therefore, an institution, to receive, appropriate, guard, dispense, and transmit these means. If all this can be accomplished outside and independently of the Church, then was her Founder mistaken in regard to the necessity of her organization and perpetuity. The Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth."

Luther, in his Larger Catechism, (Art. III., Apostles' Creed,) teaches that the following things can be attained only in and through the Church—the operations of the Holy Spirit, as regeneration and sanctification, the preaching of the gospel, the administration of the sacraments, the forgiveness of sins, and eternal life; and that without the Church there can be no knowledge of Jesus, no forgiveness of sins, no works of grace by the Holy Spirit, but that man is under the dominion of the devil, and that, although he may have some knowledge of God, he can not obtain eternal life. He says: "The Holy Spirit accomplishes this sanctification through the following means, namely, the communion of saints, or the Christian Church,

the remission of sins, the resurrection of the body, and eternal life." Again: "The Holy Ghost exerts his agency without intermission, until the last day, and for this purpose he has ordained a community or church upon earth, through which he speaks and performs all things." "For before we had obtained this"—namely, membership in the Christian Church—"we were entirely the subjects of Satan, as those who knew nothing of God and Christ. Thus, until the last day, the Holy Ghost will remain with this holy community or Christian Church, through which he persuades us, and which he uses for the purpose of promulgating and exercising the word." "Out of the Christian Church, however, where the gospel does not exert its influence, there is no forgiveness of sin, and consequently there can be no holiness."

The connection of the several parts of the third Article of the Apostles' Creed, also implies the same thing. The Holy Ghost, as the author of the Church, occupies the first place; then follows the Church; to which succeeds the forgiveness of sins; thus indicating that through the agency of the Holy Spirit in the Church, we obtain the forgiveness of our sins. To the Church, then, and to her alone, are committed and intrusted, from Christ her Head, for safe-keeping, for efficient administration, and for faithful transmission to the end of time, the word, the sacraments, and the ministry. In other words: the Church is the only *Innhaberinn* and *Trägerinn* of the means of grace. Independent of the Church, there can be no means of grace, and, ordinarily, no operations of the Holy Spirit, no saving faith, no salvation.

From this thesis, arises the importance and duty of being in fellowship with the Church.

Since the Church is the only trustee and steward of the means of grace, and since the Holy Spirit works saving faith only through these means, it must follow, that alone through the instrumentality of the Church, can man be saved, Rom. x. 13-17. If any additional argument is necessary to establish this point, we will merely suppose that the Church with her means of grace, and with the knowledge of religious truth which she has diffused among the nations of the earth, and also the accompanying influence of the Holy Spirit, were all removed from the world, and then put the question, how now can any one be saved? The world would be thrown back into heathendom, and left to the mere light of nature, without even the

traditionary knowledge of the existence of God, coming from necessity originally only through a divine revelation. To suppose man capable of being saved independently of the Church, would be the same as to suppose him capable of salvation without a positive revelation of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity, and without a saving faith wrought by the Holy Spirit. But union with Christ through faith is necessary to salvation, Acts iv. 12, and x. 43; Jno. xv. 1. If, then, man cannot be saved independently of the Church's instrumentality, can he be, outside of the Church?

There is a two-fold union with the Church—*first*, an inner soul-union, and which consists in being in fellowship with Christ by faith, and in a sincere choice and purpose of making a formal connection with the organized congregation of believers; and, *secondly*, an actual formal connection with the Church, through baptism, including a public profession of faith in Christ.

It is evident, that if saved without union with the Church by the first mode of connection, it would be salvation without Christ, which is impossible. But as union with the Church by this mode includes a sincere choice and purpose of an actual formal connection with the organized congregation of believers, it is again evident that whoever refuses to form such a union, where it is possible, can not be in the Church even by the first mode of connection—that is, whoever, of his own choice, refuses to unite with the Church in her visible organization, cannot belong to her invisible and essential communion. Again: whoever voluntarily disregards an institution of Christ, or voluntarily disobeys any of his commands, cannot be in communion with him by faith; both of which are done by him who voluntarily refuses to unite with the congregation of God's people, or the Church. It follows, then, that whoever is out of the visible Church from choice, does not belong to Christ, and therefore can not be saved. In the Church by the first mode of union, whilst one is outside of her by the second mode, can avail for our salvation only so long as the latter is impossible. It is thus evident how we must understand the phrase, "out of the Church there is no salvation."

Whilst it is true that whoever is in union with Christ by faith, is in a state of justification, and therefore entitled to salvation, it is nevertheless equally true, that whoever voluntarily refuses connection with the Church's visible organization, or whoever having once



formed such connection, and again voluntarily dissolves it, does by such deliberate act of disobedience to Christ, make his justification and consequent salvation, impossible.

But there are other reasons besides our personal salvation, that show the importance and duty of being in fellowship with the visible Church. The mutual edification of believers depends on a visible church-organization. The gifts and graces of all are necessary to the fullest development of each. To show the importance of this mutual edification, St. Paul devotes to its elucidation no less than three chapters in his first epistle to the Corinthians, chaps. 12-14. I will give but two brief quotations. "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." "For ye may all prophesy, one by one, that all may learn, and that all may be comforted." Christ says: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." To the Hebrews, St. Paul writes: "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

The duty of bringing the outside world to a saving knowledge of Christ shows the importance of all believers being in union with the visible Church. We have been bought with the precious blood of the Son of God; therefore we are not our own, but are under the strongest possible obligations to devote ourselves to his service in such a way as will put us in a condition to accomplish the greatest amount of good. Our influence for Christ can be exerted to its fullest extent, only through the Church. If, then, we would make our talents and labors fully available for Christ and our fellow-men, we dare not stand aloof from the Church.

#### IV. THESIS.

*The Validity and Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments depend not on the Administrator, but on their own Nature, and on the Institution and Command of Christ.*

Article Eighth of the Confession (German copy) says: "The sacraments are nevertheless efficacious, although the ministers by whom they are dispensed are not pious." The Latin text reads:



"The sacraments and the word are efficacious on account of the appointment and command of Christ, although they are administered by wicked men."

When the Confessors make the efficacy of the means of grace depend on the institution and command of Christ, they teach, by implication, that there is also an adaptation inherent in the means themselves to accomplish the design of their institution. This, indeed, is true of all God's works. In the physical and in the moral world, all things are related to each other as means and ends.

The efficacy of the means of grace depends, then, on their own nature, and on the institution and command of Christ.

The end to be attained by the means of grace is salvation—or, specifically, conviction of sin, repentance, faith, pardon and sanctification.

I need scarcely argue that there is an inherent adaptation in the law and the gospel, therefore, also, in the sacraments, to the attainment of these ends. The fact that these means do not attain these ends without the influence of the Holy Spirit is no argument against this natural adaptation as means to ends. If it were, then the Holy Spirit might as certainly and successfully accomplish his works of regeneration and sanctification without these means—indeed, without any means. Then, however, the whole plan of salvation would be a matter of mere arbitrary appointment, without any absolute and inherent necessity. But the Holy Spirit works through the word and sacraments because they are means adapted to the attainment of the ends designed; and he does not accomplish these ends in those who neglect these means, because they are the only appointed and recognized means that have this adaptation.

The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that *believeth*," and the word preached did not profit the Israelites, "not being mixed *with faith* in them that heard it," Rom. i. 16; Heb. iv. 2. This fact, that the word becomes efficacious only when received by faith, and fails of its efficacy when not believed, at once establishes its inherent adaptation to the attainment of the ends proposed.

The following texts also prove this inherent adaptation: Jer. xxiii. 28, 29; Heb. iv. 12; Isa. lv. 10, 11.

The efficacy of the means of grace depends, *secondly*, on the institution and command of Christ.

A religion that has, or that is only believed to have, no higher

than a human origin, has no power to reform or save mankind. Religion that has no divine authority to bind the conscience, will sink to a level with mere moral science. But let it come from God, or even be only believed to have a divine origin, and at once it brings the conscience under the strongest of all obligations and motives—the authority of God, and the interests of eternity. Without divine authority, the word and sacraments would then be mere human institutions; and as such, they could not possess even the power of the truths of natural religion to reform and save mankind. But whatever Christ has instituted and commanded, comes to us with divine authority—with this authority, therefore, we receive the word and sacraments of Christ, because instituted and commanded by him.

This natural adaptation to the ends proposed, and their divine authority thus established, give these means more than a mere logico-moral efficacy. They are, as St. Paul says, Rom. i. 16, "*the power of God unto salvation.*"

It follows, then, that the validity and efficacy of the word and sacraments do not depend on the administrator. His goodness cannot increase their efficacy, neither can his wickedness nor his heterodoxy decrease it, or deprive them of it, because in neither case can he change their natural adaptation to the end proposed, nor their authority resulting from the institution and command of Christ.

#### V. THESIS.

*Neither the Heretical nor the Ungodly Character of the Minister can make it Sinful for the True Believer to hear the Word and receive the Sacraments administered by him.*

The Latin text of our Eighth Article reads: "Yet since in this life there are many hypocrites and wicked persons mixed with them, it is lawful to receive the sacraments which are administered by wicked men, agreeably to the word of Christ: 'the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.'" Also: "They condemn the Donatists and such like, who denied that it is lawful to make use of the ministry of wicked persons in the Church, and maintained that the ministry of wicked men is useless and without efficacy." Whilst the sacraments alone are mentioned in these clauses, it is evident that the lawfulness of receiving them when administered by wicked

men, refers also to the word preached by them in its broader sense. The sacraments are useful and efficacious only because they are means of grace, and they are means of grace because of the word of God accompanying them and symbolized by them. And the word, thus in the sacraments, is the very essence of the gospel. If, then, it is lawful to receive the essence of the word, when administered in the sacraments by wicked men, the same lawfulness must extend to the reception of the whole word preached by them. This is also plainly implied in the condemnatory clause, in the words: "*licere uti ministerio malorum*;" for this expresses the lawfulness of using the ministry of wicked men in its broadest sense. This lawfulness is evident, *first*, from the qualifications required to receive the sacraments with their promised blessings: namely, repentance and faith. As these qualifications refer exclusively to the recipient and the word, and in no sense to the administrator, the character of the latter cannot change the lawfulness of receiving them, because it cannot change the qualifications of the former to partake of them.

It is evident, *secondly*, from the elements constituting the validity or efficacy of the sacraments. These, as seen in thesis fourth, are their nature and the institution and command of Christ. It was there shown, that since the administrator, notwithstanding his heterodoxy and immorality, could destroy neither the nature of the sacraments, nor the institution and command of Christ, and as these involved their adaptation to attain the ends proposed, and their power supremely to bind the conscience, he, consequently, could not destroy their efficacy. But if the administrator cannot destroy their efficacy, then it follows that it is lawful for true believers to receive them at his hands, though he may be both heterodox and immoral.

This lawfulness is evident, *thirdly*, from the mode of their operation—that is, through the word and promise of God set forth by them, through our faith appropriating their promised blessings, and through the Holy Spirit operating through them. But, again, the heretical and immoral character of the administrator can deprive us of none of these; therefore, the Holy Spirit continues to do his appropriate work through our faith resting on the sacramental word and promise. Therefore again follows the lawfulness of receiving the word and sacraments administered by him.

We may, then, say with Christ and the Confession: "The Scribes

and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not."

But whilst the heterodoxy and immorality of the minister can neither destroy the efficacy of the means of grace, nor make it unlawful to receive them at his hands, this is no encouragement nor justification to the Church to be indifferent to the character and faith of her clergy; because their immorality and heterodoxy may, and often do, communicate themselves to the laity. This has in many cases led to such corruption in doctrine and life, as to make shipwreck of faith, contravene the operation of the Holy Spirit, and thus nullify the efficacy of the means of grace. The solemn trust confided to the Church, therefore, demands of her that she guard with the most scrupulous vigilance the faith and morals of her clergy. "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that we have preached, let him be accursed." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed, for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds." "Beware of false prophets." Gal. i. 6-9; 2 John 10, 11; Matt. vii. 15.

The Apology says: "Yet we ought not to receive or hear false teachers, because they are not in Christ's stead, but are antichrists."\*

## VI. THESIS.

*Around the external factor of the Church is gathered a Foreign Material, heterogeneous in its Elements, antagonistic in its Aims, and destructive in its Operations and Influences.*

The Confessors say: the people of God receive spiritual blessings, are enlightened, strengthened, and ruled by the Holy Spirit, and are, therefore, as the kingdom of Christ, distinguished from the kingdom of Satan. Therefore, the ungodly, as belonging to the kingdom of Satan, cannot be the Church—they are only *among* Christians, and *in* the Church, but they are not on this account *a part* of the kingdom of Christ. "Now, although the wicked and ungodly hypocrites have fellowship with the true Church in external signs, in name and office; yet when we would strictly define what the Church is, we must speak of the Church called the body of Christ,

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\* Müll. Symb. Büch., vol. i., A. C., W. 156 (48), p. 162.



and having communion not only in external signs, but also holding faith and the Holy Spirit in its bosom."\* Therefore the ungodly do not belong to the true body of Christ, to the internal essence of the Church, but only to its external organization, and to this even only in outward profession of name, office and worship.

This foreign material gathered around the external factor of the Church is, however, heterogeneous in its elements to those of the true Church. The elements of the one are, the depravity of our unrenewed nature, its enmity against God, and its being under the dominion of unbelief, sin, and the devil; the elements of the other are, the regeneration of the soul by the Holy Spirit, its reanimation by the love of God and the precious hopes of the Gospel, and its submission to the rule of Christ. Thus heterogeneous in their elements, the foreign material, especially when it becomes predominant, not unfrequently succeeds in introducing into the Church other elements in doctrine, government, cultus, and morals, congenial to its own nature. In the Romish Church the following are examples—salvation by works, papal infallibility, priestly absolution, implicit submission to the government of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, auricular confession, the worship of images, prayers to the saints, prayers for the dead, indulgences, etc. In the Protestant churches we may bring under this class the neglect of church discipline, its abuse to party and selfish purposes, the disregard of each others' acts of discipline by different denominations, denominational exclusiveness on the ground of infallible orthodoxy, rationalism, the denial of plenary inspiration, etc.

As "the carnal mind is enmity against God," so we may say of these foreign elements; they are at enmity with the elements and nature of the true Church.

Again: this foreign element is *antagonistic in its aims* to those of the true Church.

This antagonism is found, not between the two elements of the Church, its inner and its outer sides, but between this dual Church and the foreign and heterogeneous materials which have aggregated themselves around the Church's visible organization. The antagonism itself is seated in their heterogeneous elements and in their conflicting aims. A soul ruled by the devil, and whose aim is the

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\* Müll. Symb. Büch., vol. i., A. C., W. 147 (12 & 13), p. 154. Henk. Bk. Conc., p. 217.



glory of self, must be antagonistic to the soul ruled by Christ, and whose aim is the welfare of man and the glory of God. This antagonism will be seen also in the heterogeneous elements in doctrine, government, cultus and morals, to which reference has already been made.

To this antagonism we may apply the following scripture language—"Can two walk together except they be agreed?" "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" Amos iii. 3; Matt. vi. 24; 2 Cor. vi. 14-16; 1 John ii. 18, 19.

These heterogeneous elements and antagonistic aims are necessarily *destructive of each other in their operations and influences.*

We have already seen how the foreign material often introduces into the church elements congenial to its own nature. Their heterogeneousness and antagonism are such that they can never harmonize. A temporary compromise may be, and often is effected; but in the end they must come into open conflict, and the one must destroy the other. It may be said with truth that here not unfrequently, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

The whole history of the Church, both Jewish and Christian, is a verification of this destructive tendency, especially the Romish Church before and in the Reformation. The one doctrine of justification by faith alone, shook the papal throne to its foundation, and has continued ever since in open conflict with its whole system. We may then aptly apply to this whole foreign element the words of Christ: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

We have in our national history a sad example of two such elements. The Declaration of Independence asserts and maintains the equality of all men by creation, and their endowment by their Creator with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The Constitution of the United States, in the inauguration of the Federal Government, tolerated the holding of men bound to service—that is, tolerated human slavery. The antagonism of

these two heterogeneous elements—human freedom and human slavery—came from necessity into open and final conflict. The salvation of the nation made emancipation a necessity.

In concluding this thesis, I maintain, therefore, the right and duty of the Church to remove from her visible organization as her inseparable external factor all those elements which endanger her existence or her purity, or impede her progress. The Church must always bear her earnest and clear testimony against heterodoxy and immorality. She dare not neglect the exercise of discipline against heretics and the openly immoral and ungodly. Neither can she be safe nor guiltless, and allow her liturgical service to usurp the place of a free and genuine spiritual worship. "If thy brother transgress against thee, go and tell him his fault," etc. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed," etc. "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you," etc. Matt. xviii. 15-18; 2 John 10, 11; 1 Cor. v. 11-13; 2 Cor. vi. 14-18.

## VII. THESIS.

*It is Implied in the Seventh and Eighth Articles of the Confession, that the Church has not yet attained her Ideal Perfection.*

In these two Articles the marks of the ideal Church are the following—it consists only of saints and true believers; in it the gospel is preached in its purity, and the sacraments are administered according to their true intent and meaning; and again, in it there is to be no schism, but all its parts are to be perfectly united under Christ its one and only Head, in one mind and in one judgment.

This is thus delineated in the New Testament. Christ is represented as loving the Church and giving himself for it, "that he might sanctify and cleanse it, \* \* \* and that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." St. Paul prays: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless

unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Again, he admonishes: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Christ prays for believers: "that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Eph. v. 25-27; 1 Thess. v. 23; 1 Cor. i. 10; John xvii. 20, 21.

In so far as the ideal perfection of the Church relates to her unity and a pure gospel and pure sacraments, it belongs to Article Seventh; but in so far as its membership should consist of only saints and true believers, it comes within the province of the Eighth Article. According to it, there are associated with the Church in this life many hypocrites and ungodly persons—that is, her empirical organization does not fully correspond with her internal and essential nature. She has not thus far attained her ideal perfection. This results mainly from the foreign elements that are associated with her external organization.

The Eighth Article seems to imply that this will continue to the end of the Christian dispensation. It says: "In this life there remain many false Christians and hypocrites, and also open sinners, among the pious." The Apology admits that the ungodly may even predominate in the Church—that since the kingdom of Christ is not yet manifest, the ungodly are, in this life, among true believers, and in the Church—and that, as among a mass of fish there is a mixture of good and bad, so the Church here below is concealed among the great body and multitude of the ungodly.

This point is more directly stated in the last condemnatory clause of the Seventeenth Article, namely: "They also condemn others who now disseminate the Jewish notions, that before the resurrection of the dead the pious (German—"the holy and pious alone") will hold the government of the world, and that the ungodly will be everywhere oppressed." (German—"will be exterminated.")

As the doctrine of the millennium belongs more properly to the Seventeenth Article, I will dismiss this thesis with one remark. That the ideal Church of Christ and his apostles, as also of the prophets of the Old Testament, includes, especially, the harmony and oneness of all believers, their purity, their devotion to religion, the preaching of the gospel to all nations, a general submission

to Christ throughout the earth, and a high state of blissful enjoyment, is evident from the following texts. Is. xi. 9; xxxv. 8-10; lxv. 16-25; 2 Pet. iii. 13; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 16; Dan. vii. 18, 27.

#### VIII. THESIS.

*Whenever the Necessity exists, it is the duty of the Church to reform Herself—to introduce such Changes in Doctrine, Cultus and Government, as will enable her to attain most successfully her Ideal Perfection.*

Whenever the Church becomes so corrupt that instead of realizing more fully her ideal perfection, she is continually departing from that ideal, and is thus failing successfully to attain the design of her organization: namely, the edification of believers and the conversion of sinners, then her reformation becomes a necessity. This was the condition of the Romish Church at the time of the Reformation.

The right and duty of reformation grow out of its necessity and the sacred trust committed to the Church as the *Innhaberinn* and *Trägerinn* of the means of grace, according to thesis third. It follows also from theses fifth and sixth, in the latter of which was shown the duty of removing from the Church all those foreign elements which endanger her existence or purity, or impede her progress; and in the former, the same duty in regard to immoral and heretical teachers. But if the excommunication of unworthy and dangerous members, either of the laity or clergy, is a duty, then much more is it a duty to reform the Church in her doctrines, cultus, and government, when these themselves encourage or connive at heterodoxy or immorality. This was the ground of the Reformation of the sixteenth century.

In effecting such a reformation, the Church does not lose her right to the title of the Christian Church, but only the more fully establishes this right. If a corrupt church in returning to a pure gospel, pure sacraments, and an evangelical cultus and government, forfeits the right to the title of the Christian Church, then no Christian people ever possessed such right. For nothing else can establish such a claim; neither the antiquity of the Church, nor an apostolical succession, even if it could be satisfactorily proved, nor yet a perfect oneness in doctrine, cultus and government; because



all these might exist, and yet the Church be corrupt and antagonistic to the institutions and commands of Christ. Against the claim of the pope, founded on the above grounds, that the Romish Church alone possessed the right to be called the true and only Church, and that the Lutherans had forfeited all such claim, the Confessors defended themselves in the Seventh and Eighth Articles of the Confession, and also in the Apology. In the latter, they say: "Hence we draw the conclusion, according to the Holy Scriptures, that the true Christian Church consists of all those throughout the world, who truly believe the gospel of Christ, and have the Holy Spirit." Again: "The Church, as St. Paul says, 1 Tim. iii. 15, is properly the pillar and ground of the truth."\*

Luther says: "The true Church is known from the false, in this—the true Church teaches that God forgives us our sins freely, and alone on account of his grace and mercy, for Christ's sake, without our merits or works, when we are made sensible of our sins and confess them, and with the heart firmly believe in Christ; on the other hand, the false church attributes all this to our own merits and works, and teaches us to retain our doubts."†

The right of reformation in the Church being thus established, and also the right, when reformed, to the title of the true Christian Church, the question presents itself, would any particular Church, say the Lutheran, or any part of it, forfeit the right to retain her own name, if in order to attain more fully and more successfully the standard of the ideal Church, she would effect a reformation within herself, or more specifically, if she would believe it necessary to adopt her Confession merely as to fundamental correctness? If the title, "Evangelical Lutheran Church," was designed to indicate, when it was assumed and accepted, that her true children in all coming ages must receive her confessions in the sense in which she then understood them, and in none other, or cease to be Evangelical Lutherans, then we must answer our question in the affirmative. But this would be claiming for the Reformers, either that they could not err, or did not err, in the preparation of our Confession. In either case, it virtually claims for them, either *in* that specific work, or at least, *for* that work, infallibility. It is also

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\* Müll. Symb. Büch., Vol. I., A. C., W. 151 (28), pp. 157, 158; and W. 149 (20), pp. 155, 156. Henk. Bk. Conc., pp. 221, 222, 220.

† Luth. Werke, Irr., Erl., 1854, Vol. 59, p. 136 (1199).



virtually saying to her own children: if you, in the exercise of your private judgment, in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and which we claim and exercise for ourselves, and which we also accord to you, should come to the settled conviction that any of the doctrines of our Confession are unscriptural, even in non-fundamentals, then you forfeit your right to be called Evangelical Lutheran—you must seek a home elsewhere: or, if you can find none of the same faith, you must set up for yourselves, or you must not avow or proclaim your convictions. But if the Reformation did nothing better than this for Christendom, then it is an abortion; then the name Evangelical Lutheran is a misnomer, and not worthy of being retained.

Luther desired simply to be called a Christian, an Evangelical Christian; and the Church of the Reformation, the Evangelical Church,—thus indicating that their faith was the pure faith of the gospel, the pure faith of the apostles, and that their Church was the true Christian Church.

The Evangelical Lutheran, then, claimed to be the true Christian Church, and she denied all human infallibility, and established for all time the right of private judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Add to this Luther's description, already given, of a true and false church, and dare we deny the right to a qualified reception of our doctrines, and still retain the name of the true Christian Church, if in such qualification we continue firmly to teach, "that God forgives us our sins freely, and alone on account of his grace and mercy, for Christ's sake, without our merits or works, when we are made sensible of our sins, and confess them, and with the heart firmly believe in Christ?" And, if thus entitled to the name of the true Christian Church, how can it involve a forfeiture of the name of Evangelical Lutheran?

But it may be said, if this conclusion is legitimate, then all orthodox Protestants might claim the title of Evangelical Lutheran—then we might as well all be one. I must unhesitatingly admit the inference; and I re-iterate it—we might as well all be one; and I will add, if we had enough of the spirit of our Master, so that we could in charity tolerate each other's doctrinal differences, we might not only as well, but much better, *be one*.

A certain Lutheran divine, not of the General Synod, speaking of the members of various Christian denominations, says: "Though they have not all the same forms of government, and the same cer-

emonies, yet have they one Lord. Though they have not even the same doctrines in all particulars, yet have they the one faith and the one baptism, if they be Christians at all. No diversities among them can break the oneness of the Lord's body."

Also: "All the baptized who, notwithstanding their faults, cling sincerely to their one Lord in the one faith, being thus daily cleansed from all their sins, are of the Church, the one body. Here there is unity and no schism." Again: "Whoever believes is in the unity of the Church, is a child of the Jerusalem that is above, the mother of us all. And he remains in this unity, notwithstanding his doctrinal or practical errors, so long as he continues to believe: for so long the Holy Spirit is not taken away." Once more: "The Apostles' Creed contains a summary of all the Christian doctrines, and whoever believes it, has the whole Christian faith."\*

#### IX. THESIS.

*Are there any Circumstances under which it would be the Right and Duty of Protestant Christians to organize a new Church?*

The Church was organized to attain a specific end. We have seen that whenever she fails to attain that end, by constantly departing from her ideal perfection, instead of approaching more nearly to it, there exists a necessity for a reformation; and also, when such necessity exists, the right and duty of reformation also exist. If now, under such circumstances, the reformation of existing churches is impossible or impracticable, there is no choice left true Christians but to organize a new church, or rather, to reconstruct the Church itself in a separate and distinct organization. It is not only their right—the high and sacred trust committed to the Church makes it their bounden duty.

The right of the Churches of the Reformation to the title of true Christian Churches, depends wholly on this right of Christians, under the above circumstances, to form a new Church. "The Protestants could justify their separation from the Romish Church only by going back to the original difference between the inner communion and the outer organization, and by distinguishing between the kingdom of God as ideal, and its imperfect manifestation in each particular Church."†

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\* Ev. Rev., Vol. VIII., pp. 6-9.

† Hut. Red., Loc. XXI., *De Ecclesia*, p. 322.

But this right must not be unnecessarily exercised. The many sects into which professing Christians are divided, show that it has been abused. Christians have divided on the mode of baptism, on the number of immersions, on the question whether immersion should be performed forwards or backwards, on the cut of the coat, on the choice between buttons and hooks and eyes—then again on singing hymns and psalms, and even on Watts' and Rouse's version of the Psalms. Some have left the existing churches and set up for themselves, for no better reason, we fear, than that they could not carry out their own whims and fancies.

When now we consider the petition of Christ, John xvii. 20, 21, "Neither pray I for these alone," etc.; and then, also, the admonition of St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.; we must conclude that there is guilt somewhere—to set aside such a prayer and such an admonition, without the most weighty, the most dire necessity, must bring upon the criminal guilt of no ordinary character.

But may not the origin of some of these sects be attributable to the then existing churches? A little more liberty in the faith outside of "ruin by the fall, redemption by Christ, and renovation by the Holy Spirit," and insisting a little more on genuine conversion, holy living, and greater Christian activity, would no doubt in some instances have prevented these divisions—it would at least have left not even a pretence for them. The division and re-union of the Presbyterian Church is an illustration of this point. In short, the guilt rests partly with those separating from the Church and organizing for themselves, and partly with the churches from which they separated.

That there should be more toleration in the Lutheran Church, we think does not admit of a doubt.

Before concluding, I will give the views of Dr. F. V. Reinhard, bearing on this subject.

In an anniversary sermon on the Reformation, delivered in the year 1812, a translation of which may be found in volume fifth of the *Evangelical Review*, pp. 352–365, he gives what he regards as "the invisible and sacred bonds by which our whole Church is united;" "bonds" which, he says, were "woven by the Reformation, and which will hold forever what they have bound together."

The specific bonds of union which he discusses are thus stated:

“Like zeal for freedom of conscience; a common subjection to the distinctive authority of Scripture; a bond of faith harmonizing in the great leading truths of the Gospel; reciprocal toleration in all the rest; and an earnest striving after every species of perfection.

In discussing the third bond—a faith harmonizing in the great leading truths of the Gospel—he presents these truths in detail, and which may be briefly summed up thus: one God, ruin by the fall, redemption by Christ, renovation by the Holy Spirit, genuine repentance, a living faith in Jesus, purifying the heart and life, fervent love towards God and men, and a promise of immortality and eternal life to those who believe, are baptized, confess Jesus publicly and at the Lord’s Supper, and remain faithful to the end of life.

Reinhard maintains that “it is the living conviction of the chief truths of the Gospel”—and he refers to those just enumerated—which Lutherans hold in common, that has held us together. He then adds: “Their conviction is rendered yet firmer and more inward by *their reciprocal toleration of all the rest.*”

His just and judicious remarks under this head I cannot omit.

“That the Scripture, in addition to the main truths of the gospel, embraces much that may give occasion to conflicting opinions; that these fundamental truths themselves may be conceived of in different ways, when they are developed and unfolded completely; that the method in which Scripture is examined and explained; that the history of the Christian Church in all ages, the investigations and discoveries of the human understanding, the present position of the world, and the condition of the sciences; that all these in a Church like ours, where everything is examined, and every spring of knowledge freely searched, must exert the most varied influence on the religious opinions of its members, and must originate an incalculable diversity in their views and convictions—this fact lies clearly before us, and the experience of every day confirms it. But this diversity need excite no solicitude; it relates merely to minor matters, and cannot prejudice that unity of spirit in which we abide in the grand truths of the gospel. It even becomes a *bond of peace*, and contributes to the firmer union of the members of our church one with another. For every man feels that he would countenance an entrenchment on his own freedom, and expose it to an unrighteous restriction, if in things in which we can and may rightfully differ, he would attempt to prescribe and force upon others his own way of



thinking. Should he not allow every one to partake in that freedom which with so much justice he claims for himself? Shall not the pressing need of fraternal forbearance and of complete freedom of conscience unite our members the more firmly in proportion as this privilege is with difficulty found elsewhere? Does not our Church become a firmer whole by this her peculiar forbearance, in proportion as she is incapable of being disturbed by controversies in lesser matters? That such controversies have arisen in abundance, is true. Even among us there have not been wanting at all times short-sighted zealots who confounded the non-essential with the essential; who neither possessed nor recognized the tolerant spirit of our church; men who would have been capable of forcing on the Church their views, which were often completely false. But however much this blind zeal at times disturbed the tranquillity of our church, it has never been able to dissolve her connection, and endanger her perpetuity; that reciprocal forbearance to which she pledged her members, has remained a sacred bond which rendered their connection indissoluble."

Well had it been for our Evangelical Lutheran Church had these principles and sentiments always been heartily embraced and practically applied.

That Reinhard places the peculiar views of our Confession on the sacraments, as baptismal regeneration, and the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, among the truths concerning which the reciprocal toleration is allowed in the Lutheran Church, is evident from the above extracts, as also from his "Dogmatik." Concerning fundamental and non-fundamental Articles, he holds that those alone are absolutely fundamental which constitute religion in distinction from theology. He says: "In regard to those propositions which belong to religion, nearly all the parties are in the main agreed. They differ, however, in the manner of representing these fundamental principles. Had it not been for the more definite and critical explanations of the simple propositions of religion, and then maintaining that these alone contain the truth, such divisions could not have originated. It is easy, however, to see that, in consequence of the activity of the human mind, such explanations were unavoidable, but, also, that they would result in no injury to Christianity, if the different parties would only tolerate each other in a brotherly spirit, which religion everywhere makes one of its first duties."\*

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\* Dogmatik, pp. 571, 583, 584, 604, 36, 23.



If on our peculiarities on the sacraments and a few other points all Lutherans could only heartily consent to a full Reinhardian toleration—or, going back to an undisputed authority—to *die von Luther gegen Melanchthon bewiesene Toleranz*, how soon might our divisions be healed, and what a mighty power would we soon be in this land and in the world!

## ARTICLE IX.

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## BAPTISM.

BY F. W. CONRAD, D. D.

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THIS Article, according to the German text of the Augsburg Confession, reads thus:

“Respecting Baptism it is taught, that it is necessary; that grace is offered through it; and that children ought to be baptized, who, through such Baptism, are presented unto God, and become acceptable unto him. Therefore the Anabaptists are condemned, who teach that Infant Baptism is improper.”

According to the Latin text of the Confession, it is as follows:

“Of Baptism they teach that it is necessary to salvation, and that by Baptism the grace of God is offered, and that children are to be baptized, who by Baptism, being offered to God, are received into God's favor. They condemn the Anabaptists, who allow not the Baptism of children, and affirm that children are saved without Baptism.”

### I. ITS NAMES.

Names, when arbitrarily given, have no reference to the constitution of the object designated by them; but when naturally employed, they are designed to express some characteristic of the person or institution to which they are applied. The name Baptism was employed by Jesus Christ and his Apostles in a natural sense. The generic meaning of the Greek word *Baptismos*, which has been introduced into our English version without undergoing a translation, is that of a *washing*, and it is applied to Baptism by the New Testament writers, because it is a “washing of water by the word,” even “a washing of regeneration.” And in like manner do the Confessors of the Lutheran Church designate Baptism as a sacrament, a Christian ceremony, a holy ordinance, a divine testimony, because

each of these terms represents some characteristic found in the constitution of Baptism.

## II. ITS INSTITUTION.

Baptism was instituted by Jesus Christ. The words upon which it was founded by him, are recorded by Matthew and Mark as follows: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15, 16.

Baptism, not having been devised by man, but instituted in accordance with the will of God, must, therefore, be regarded not as a human device, but as a divine institution.

## III. ITS CONSTITUENT PARTS.

As in nature, things are constituted by the combination of elements, so in the Church of Christ, institutions are formed by the appropriation and union of natural and supernatural elements. The natural element introduced into the constitution of Baptism, is water; the supernatural element, the Word of God. "For," as the Larger Catechism declares, "if the word is separated from the water, it is not different from that used for ordinary purposes, and it may well be styled a common ablution; but when it is connected with the word as God has ordained it, it is a sacrament, and it is called Christian Baptism." And with this agrees the definition of Baptism given in the Smalcald Articles: "Baptism is nothing else than the word of God connected with water, commanded by his institution. \* \* " As Augustine also says: "The word being added to the element, it becomes a sacrament."

The wisdom of God is manifested in nature, by adapting certain elements for combination, and the same wisdom is exhibited by the adaptation of water and the word to form a sacramental union. To the accomplishment of this end, it was necessary that water, which, as a natural element, was unfitted to enter into combination with the word as a supernatural element, should be so changed by its appropriation to a religious end, as to be adapted for a union with the word in the sphere of the supernatural. This adaptation the water receives through its use in the administration of Baptism. In this

manner it becomes an efficacious sign, a vehicle of truth, "a visible word," analogous in its nature to the written word. While the water, therefore, as a sign or symbol, reveals the depravity of man, and the necessity of regeneration, the word enforces the command of God, and presents the promise of pardon, grace and salvation.

"For," says Luther in his sermon on Holy Baptism, "in order that Baptism may be and be called a sacrament, it is necessary, first of all, that some external, tangible sign or substance be employed, through which God deals visibly with us, so that we may be assured of his operation. For without some external sign or medium, God will not operate upon us merely by a deeply secret inspiration, or a peculiar divine revelation. But the external work and sign will accomplish nothing at all, if his word is not added, through which the sign becomes mighty, and we perceive what God is accomplishing in us by this sign. But the divine command also must be united to both these, in order that we may become assured of his will and work in this sign and word. And they should be viewed in immediate connection with each other, and not be severed and separated, since in union with each other they constitute a correct Baptism."

#### IV. ITS ADMINISTRATOR.

Baptism, in order that it may answer the end of its institution, must be administered, that is, the words of the institution must be spoken, and the water applied to the person presented for Baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. An administrator becomes, therefore, indispensable, and God has instituted the holy ministry through his Son, Jesus Christ, authorizing them to preach the gospel to every creature, and to baptize all who believed in his name. Although Baptism is a church ordinance, which is to be administered by the Church, and through which members are initiated into the Church, nevertheless, the authority to administer it has not been conferred upon every believer connected with a Christian congregation, but upon the minister duly called and installed as its pastor. As Christ did not baptize personally, but through his Apostles, so does the Church not baptize directly through its members, but representatively through its minister, as its divinely appointed and ordained head.

## V. ITS VALIDITY.

The validity of Baptism depends upon its essential characteristics, and not upon its accidental concomitants. To the former belong its constituent parts, water and the word of God, administered by an authorized minister, according to the command of Christ; to the latter belong the character of the administrator, the mode of applying the water, and the state of the mind and heart of the recipient. When thus administered, Baptism is clothed with the name, word, authority and power of God, and is always valid, whether the preacher who administers it be pious or not pious, whether the water be applied to the person by pouring or sprinkling, or the person be applied to the water by immersion, or whether the person receiving it be a child or an adult, a believer or a deceived unbeliever. Baptism ought, therefore, never to be repeated. The intrinsic nature and power of the word are not destroyed by the character of the preacher, the manner of its presentation, and the non-reception by the hearer, but remains, according to its divine constitution, quick and powerful; and the same is true of Baptism. Accordingly, Luther says in the Larger Catechism: "Baptism does not become wrong on this account (whether the person baptized believes or does not believe), but all depends upon the word and command of God. Now this is, indeed, a nice point; but it is founded upon the assertion, that Baptism is nothing else than water and the word of God intimately united; that is, when the word is connected with the water, then Baptism is right, although the individual be destitute of faith at the time of his Baptism; for my faith does not *make*, but *receive* Baptism. \* \* Therefore Baptism ever continues valid. \* \* But no one is permitted to sprinkle us with water again; for, if a person permit himself to be sunk into water a hundred times, it would still be no more than one Baptism; this work, however, continues and the signification is permanent."

## VI. ITS MODE.

The mode of Baptism does not belong to its substance, but to its accidents; and hence, Baptism may be performed by either sprinkling, pouring or immersion. There being no difference of opinion between the Confessors and the Romanists, concerning the mode of Baptism, the subject was not introduced into their Confession; and



as it was regarded of minor importance, it was referred to only incidentally, in other portions of the Symbolical Books. The following quotations from the Larger Catechism present such incidental allusions to the mode of Baptism:

"Baptism is not our work, but God's. For thou must distinguish between the Baptism which God gives, and that which the keeper of a bath-house gives. But God's work to be saving does not exclude faith, but demands it, for without faith it cannot be grasped. For in the mere fact that thou hast had water poured on thee, thou hast not so received Baptism as to be useful to thee; but it profits thee if thou art baptized with the design of obeying God's command and institution, and in God's name of receiving in the water the salvation promised. This neither the hand nor the body can effect, but the heart must believe." "We should say, I am baptized, therefore the promise of salvation is given me for soul and body."

"For to this end these two things were done in Baptism, that the body, which can only receive the water, is wet by pouring, and that in addition, the word is spoken that the soul may receive it. The act (of Baptism) consists in our being put in connection with the water, and after its passing over us, in being withdrawn from it again. These two, our being put in connection with the water, and being withdrawn from it again, signify the efficacy and work of Baptism, which are nothing else but the mortification of the old Adam, and afterwards the rearing of the new man."

These are the words of Luther. In the first quotation, he refers manifestly to the mode of Baptism by pouring, and in the second no less explicitly to that of immersion. From these declarations, as well as from his translations, liturgies and other writings, it is demonstrable that he believed sprinkling and pouring to be a valid and scriptural mode of Baptism; that at a certain period of his life he expressed a preference for immersion, but that he never regarded it as necessary, and that he cannot, therefore, be truthfully claimed as an immersionist. While Baptism was commonly administered in Europe during the sixteenth century by pouring and sprinkling, as well as by immersion, all over Germany it was performed, says Bugenhagen, "by pouring the water over the head and shoulders of the child." And pouring and sprinkling have been adopted as the preferable mode by the Lutheran Church in all ages and lands.

## VII. ITS SUBJECTS.

That adult believers are proper subjects of Baptism was taken for granted by the Confessors as the doctrine held by the Church universal; and that it ought also to be administered to children, they declare in the Article of their Confession under consideration. That children are proper subjects of Baptism is demonstrable from the following arguments, to most of which reference is made in the Symbolical Books.

1. *From the command of Christ.* The word, as one of the essential elements of Baptism, authorizes the Apostles to baptize "all nations." The command thus issued by Jesus Christ, is not specific, directing ministers of the gospel to baptize men, women or children, but generic, commissioning them to baptize "all nations," and, therefore, it includes children as well as adults. While the command to baptize is unrestricted to either age or sex, it is, nevertheless, limited in its application by the qualifications demanded as conditions of its reception. The qualifications thus required of adults, are repentance and faith; and the requisition for the baptism of children is, that at least one of the parents be a believer in Christ. These conditions are presented in other portions of the sacred Scriptures, and were required by the Apostles in the administration of Baptism, both to adult believers and the children of their households.

2. *From the constitution, unity and perpetuity of the Church.* God, in the original constitution of his Church, established infant membership, and instituted circumcision as the rite through which children were to be admitted into it. At first, membership was mainly confined to the Jews, but, "in the fulness of time," the same privilege was conferred upon the Gentiles. In the accomplishment of this end, God did not organize a new Church, but simply extended the ecclesiastical advantages of the Jewish Church to all the Gentile nations. He did not pluck up the old "olive tree," but simply broke off some of "the natural branches," and then cut off branches from the wild "olive tree," and grafted them "into the good olive tree" in their stead, in order that they might become partakers of "the root and fatness" thereof. Christ, the Chief Shepherd, did not establish a new fold, neither did he confine his pastoral supervision to the sheep of the Jewish fold; but realizing that he had other sheep, which were not of that fold, he made the necessary provision

for bringing them in, in order that there might be and remain, as there had been, "but one fold and one Shepherd." In other words, Christ did not make such radical changes in the New Testament dispensation as to constitute a new Church. He did not restrict church membership to adults, and thereby exclude children from its rights and blessings, secured to them by covenant and promise in all generations. Baptism was simply substituted for circumcision, as the initiatory rite of the Church; it became the sign of the same promise and the seal of the same covenant; it was administered to parents and children by the Apostles, as circumcision had been to Jewish fathers and their male children; and, hence, Baptism is expressly declared by the inspired writers, to be "the circumcision made without hands," even "the circumcision of Christ."

"Through Baptism," says the Larger Catechism, "we are first taken into the community of Christians and of the Christian Church. If infant Baptism were wrong hitherto, down to the present day, there could not have been a Christian on earth. Now, since God confirms Baptism by the communication of his Holy Spirit, as was truly the case in some of the Fathers, as St. Bernard, Gerson, John Huss, and others who were baptized in their infancy; and as the holy Christian Church cannot discontinue until the end of the world, it must indeed be acknowledged, that such Baptism of children is pleasing to God. For God cannot be against himself, or favor falsehood and knavery, or grant his grace and Spirit to this end. \* \* For this article: I believe in a holy, Christian Church, the communion of saints, can neither be withdrawn from us nor overthrown."

The logical force of this argument may be illustrated by reference to the relation of the common and statute laws of the State. The common law confers general rights and privileges; the statute law repeals and limits them. The plaintiff having established his right to a certain privilege by the common law, his claim cannot be annulled, unless the defendant proves that the right in dispute has been repealed by express provision of the statute law. In like manner does the Old Testament establish church membership, and confer its privileges upon children. Now, unless the New Testament, by express provision, repeals the right conferred upon children and restricts the privilege of church membership to adults, their claim to all its advantages remains in full force. It was entirely unneces-

sary, therefore, that Christ should institute infant membership and command his Apostles to baptize children. But if it was his design to deprive children of the blessings conferred upon them from the days of Abraham, it was indispensable that he should do this by giving specific directions to that effect, and enforcing them by adequate reasons. But as he gave no such command, his Apostles regarded the claims of children to membership in his Church as valid, and uniformly baptized the heads of families, who became believers, together with their households.

3. *From the unity and perpetuity of the Covenant of Grace, with all its promised blessings.* God originally instituted a covenant with Abraham and his posterity, in the words following, to wit: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee and thy seed after thee." Gen. xvii. 7. Into this covenant, God commanded the children of Israel, in all their tribes and with all their children, to enter, from generation to generation. Deut. xxix. 9. The token of this covenant was circumcision, and the divine direction was given that every man child among them should be circumcised. Gen. xvii. 10. The promises connected with this covenant embraced a numerous posterity, the land of Canaan, the privileges of church membership, the Messiah, and all the blessings of redemption. These blessings were sealed by circumcision, and forfeited by its neglect. "Every man child who is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." Gen. xvii. 14.

From all the references made by the inspired Apostles to the covenant made with Abraham, the following propositions are clearly established: That this covenant was not designed to be temporary, but "everlasting," and hence, it has not been annulled, but remains in full force. Gal. iii. 17. That the heathen, the Gentiles, as well as his natural posterity, became alike the seed and children of Abraham, of the covenant, and of the promise through faith. That the promise, embraced in the covenant, "that all the nations of the earth should be blessed in him," included Christ and the Holy Spirit, the Gospel with all the blessings of grace and redemption. That, as the natural seed of Abraham received the sign of circumcision, as the seal of the righteousness of faith, so did the spiritual seed of Abraham receive the sign of Baptism, as the seal of the



same righteousness of faith. Gal. iii. 27, 29; Rom. iv. 11. That all believers, as Abraham's seed, are "heirs according to the promise," which pertains to them and their children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call. Gal. iii. 29; Acts ii. 39. And that, accordingly, both Jews and Gentiles, as soon as they became believers, were called upon to be baptized, together with their children. Acts ii. 38, 39. Now, as the covenant of grace, in the Jewish dispensation, embraced children; as the promise connected with it had reference to children; as circumcision, the token of it, was applied to children; as the blessings sealed by it were conferred upon children, it follows, that as the covenant, the promise and the blessings remain the same, Baptism, the rite which confirms the covenant and seals its promised blessings in the Christian dispensation, ought to be applied to the same subjects, namely, to parents and children. And as the substitution of Baptism for circumcision did not annul the covenant, nor render its promise of none effect, neither did it confine its blessings to adults and withhold them from children.

The strength of the argument and the weakness of the objection to it, based upon the substitution of Baptism for circumcision, may be illustrated by reference to the amendment of a constitution. Suppose that by the old constitution of a state, certain prerogatives should be conferred upon every naturalized adult citizen as well as upon his children—say, the right of voting and holding office upon the adult, and the right of free education and moral culture upon the children—and that these prerogatives should be confirmed according to a prescribed ceremony. This constitution, as amended, makes no change either in the conditions required, or in the prerogatives conferred by naturalization, but provides for a change in the ceremony of ratification. The substitution of one form of ratification for another, could manifestly in no wise affect the proper subjects of naturalization, nor limit the prerogatives granted thereby. These would remain as secure to the children as to their parents. The Old Testament confers certain ecclesiastical prerogatives upon parents and children, and confirms them by a religious ceremony, circumcision. The New Testament nowhere either restricts or annuls the rights and privileges confirmed to parents and their children by the Old Testament. It simply sets aside circumcision and substitutes Baptism as the more significant and appropriate mode of initiating believers and their households



into one holy Church of the living God, and of sealing to them the blessings promised in the covenant of grace and redemption. The substitution of Baptism for circumcision must, therefore, be regarded as simply a ceremonial arrangement, effecting no radical change in the constitution of the Church, the persons entitled to membership, or the prerogatives conferred upon them by covenant and promise.

4. *From the instructions and example of Christ.* "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them." Matt. xix. 13-15. Mark adds, "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them." "And he took a child and set him in the midst of them, and when he had taken him in his arms he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me, and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me." Mark ix. 36, 37. "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." Luke xviii. 17. "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." See also Matt. xviii. 10, 14.

In these passages, the opinions and instructions of Christ concerning little children are given, and the manner in which he treated them, and desired that his disciples should treat them, are set forth. He regarded them as among the lost, whom he came, according to the will of his Father, to save from perishing. He warned all against despising them, rebuked those who forbade them to come to him, and declared that "their angels did always behold the face of his father which is in heaven." He received them, took them in his arms, laid his hands on them, and imparted his blessing to them. Created by him, and redeemed by his blood, he claimed them as his own, opened the door of his kingdom and invited them to come in, directed parents to bring them to him, and instructed his Apostles to receive them in his name. As an incentive to obedience, he announced that those who receive such little ones in his name, do thereby receive both him and the Father that sent him. And as a consequence of these truths, he positively affirms, that unless men be

converted and become as little children, and thus receive Christ and the kingdom of heaven, they shall in no wise enter therein, because of such is the kingdom of heaven. It is hardly necessary to add, that through Infant Baptism the views and directions of Christ in regard to little children are carried out, and his example and that of his Apostles in their treatment of them imitated; while the sentiments and practice of those who reject Infant Baptism appear in striking contrast therewith.

5. *From the practice of Household Baptism by the Apostles.* Baptism was not first instituted by John the Baptist, and afterwards adopted by Christ, as the initiatory rite of his Church, but it originated among the Jews, and was practiced by them ages before in the reception of proselytes from among the heathen. Maimonides testifies that Baptism was already practiced in the wilderness before the giving of the law; that proselytes were thus made to Judaism in the days of Solomon and David; and that the children of the proselytes were baptized as well as their parents. And Lightfoot, the greatest of the old rabbinical scholars, says: "The baptizing of infants was a thing as commonly known and as commonly used before John's coming, and at the time of his coming and subsequently, as any thing holy that was used among the Jews; and they were as familiarly acquainted with Infant Baptism as they were with Infant Circumcision."

Under such circumstances, it is manifest that the Apostles, being Jews, with their knowledge of the establishment of infant membership in the Church, and the practice of infant Baptism prevalent among them before their eyes, would continue the reception of children into the Church by Baptism, unless they were prohibited from doing so in so many words by Christ himself. And as no such prohibition was given by him, they continued the practice of baptizing the children of all parents who professed faith in Jesus Christ. Accordingly it is expressly mentioned by Luke, that Lydia, as soon as her heart was opened, so that she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul, "was baptized and her household;" and that when the jailor at Philippi believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, "he and all his were baptized straightway;" and Paul states that he "baptized also the household of Stephanus." In this manner, believing parents and their children became ecclesiastical households, or Christian churches. There was such a Church

organized in the house of Philemon (Phil. i. 2), in the house of Nymphas (Col. iv. 15), and in the house of Aquilla and Priscilla (Rom. xvi. 5). These churches were designated by the name of the father of the family, and called his "house." The "house of Stephanus" and the "house of Onesiphorus" were constituted ecclesiastical households or Christian churches through Infant Baptism, as practiced by the Apostles. In other words, the Apostles practiced household Baptism in the organization and government of Christian congregations, both among the Jews and the Gentiles.

6. *From the History of Infant Baptism in the Christian Church.* Infant Baptism must either be a human invention, or a divine institution. If it be a human invention, it must have had an inventor; it must have been introduced at a certain period by some one, and history must have recorded his name, the time when the innovation was introduced, and the process through which his sentiments and practice became universal in the primitive church. But the pages of ecclesiastical history contain no account of its introduction. No such name can be found, no such period is mentioned, and no such ecclesiastical change even referred to by any ecclesiastical writer of the primitive ages of Christianity.

But if Infant Baptism be a divine institution, ordained by Jesus Christ and practiced by his Apostles, it would be rational to conclude that its introduction and practice would become general in the primitive Christian churches, and that it would continue to prevail in subsequent ages. And this conclusion is verified by the concurrent testimony of history.

The Christian fathers represent Infant Baptism as a universal custom derived from the Apostles. Justin Martyr, born about the time of St. John's death, says that among the members of the Church in his day, "there were many of both sexes, some sixty, and some seventy years old, who were made disciples to Christ *in their infancy*." Origen, born eighty-five years later, says: "There was a tradition in the Church received from the Apostles, that children also ought to be baptized." Augustine says: "The whole Church practices Infant Baptism; it was not instituted by councils, but was always in use," and that he "never heard of any person, either in the Church or among the heretics, who denied the propriety of baptizing infants." And this testimony, Pelagius, who

travelled in England, France, Italy, Africa and Palestine, corroborates. Infant Baptism can thus be traced from the fifth century down to the first, yea, to the very threshold of the Apostolic Church. The testimony of ecclesiastical history, relative to Infant Baptism, is summed up by Dr. S. S. Schmucker, as follows:\*

“During the first four hundred years from the formation of the Christian Church, neither any society of men nor any individual denied the lawfulness of baptizing infants. Tertullian only urged some delay in the baptism of infants, and that not in all cases. And Gregory deferred it perhaps to his own children. In the next seven hundred years there was neither a society nor an individual who even pleaded its delay. In the year A. D. 1120, one sect opposed infant baptism, but it was opposed by the other churches as heretical, and soon came to nothing. From that time no one opposed the baptism of infants until the year 1522, when the Anabaptists arose, since which period, also, the great body of the Christian Church has continued to practice infant baptism.”

#### VIII. ITS SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER, AS A MEANS OF GRACE.

The Confessors declare that “through Baptism the grace of God is offered.” By the grace of God they mean those moral and spiritual influences which God, out of pure favor, has introduced into our world through the mediation of Jesus Christ, under whose operation man is induced to exercise faith in the word and promise of God, through which he obtains the remission of sins, becomes a new creature, and is recognized as an heir of eternal life. These gracious influences are exerted by the Holy Spirit through the word of God. And as we have seen that water, as a constituent element of Baptism, by its appropriation to a sacramental purpose, becomes an efficacious sign, and as a “visible word,” united with the written and spoken word, with which the Holy Spirit is united, and through which he operates, Baptism becomes a means of grace co-ordinate with the word of God. As grace is offered through the promise of the gospel made in Baptism, when this promise is received by faith, the grace offered is also conferred in Baptism, and becomes efficacious in the justification, regeneration, and salvation of the soul. And as children are to be baptized, grace is offered to them as well as to adults by Baptism.

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\* Pop. Theol., p. 262.



In accordance with these views the Apology says: "For it is altogether certain that the divine promises of grace and of the Holy Spirit belong not only to adults, but also to children. Now, the promises do not apply to those that are out of the Church of Christ, where there is no gospel nor sacrament. For the kingdom of Christ exists only where the word of God and the sacraments are found. It is, therefore, a truly Christian and necessary practice to baptize children in order that they may become participants of the gospel, the promise of salvation and grace, as Christ commands, Matt. xxviii. 19. Now, as grace and salvation in Christ are offered to all, so Baptism is offered both to men and women, to youths and infants. Hence, it certainly follows that we may and should baptize infants; for in and with Baptism, universal grace and the treasure of the gospel are offered to them."

Baptism, as a means of grace, is called a sacrament. This word is not found in the Scriptures. It was applied in ancient times to the oath of the Roman soldier (*sacramentum*) by which he bound himself to obedience and loyalty. And as by the sacraments, and especially by Baptism, the Christian is enrolled as a soldier of Christ, and binds himself to be faithful to him, as the captain of his salvation, it was significantly called by the Latins a sacrament, and is thus designated until this day by the theologians of the Lutheran Church.

Baptism is declared to be one of the "sacraments through which, as means, God imparts the Holy Spirit, who, in his own time and place, works faith in those that hear the gospel."\* "Concerning their use it is taught, that the sacraments have been instituted, not only as tokens by which Christians may be known externally, but as signs and evidences of the divine will towards us, for the purpose of exciting and strengthening our faith; hence they also require faith, and they are properly used then only, when received in faith and when faith is strengthened by them."† "True sacraments, \* \* commanded of God, have the promise of grace, which in reality belongs to and is the New Testament. For the external signs were instituted to move our hearts, namely, both by the word and the external signs, to believe when we are baptized, and when we receive the Lord's body, that God will be truly merciful to us,

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\* A. C., Art. V.

† A. C., Art. XIII.



as Paul says, Rom. x. 17: "Faith cometh by hearing." As the word enters our ears, so the external signs are placed before our eyes, inwardly to excite and move the heart to faith. The word and the external signs work the same thing in our hearts; as Augustine well says: "The sacrament is a visible word; for the external sign is like a picture, and signifies the same thing preached by the word; both, therefore, effect the same thing."\*

Baptism, as a sacrament, according to the above statements, and such as are contained in the parallel passages of the other symbols, is an external religious ceremony; not only a token of recognition through which Christians may be known to each other, but an outward, efficacious sign of the divine will toward us, of the grace of the New Testament, of the covenant of promise, of reconciliation with God, of human depravity, and of the remission of sins. It is a sure testimony, furnishing evidence of God's grace and purpose towards us; a confirmation of the word and a seal of the promise of God. It is a means through which God imparts the Holy Spirit, and operates in exciting and strengthening faith, and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost.

The manner in which Baptism, as a means of grace, exerts its influence and attains its end, is also explained. As it is an outward ceremony, a token of recognition and a sign of the most momentous truths, the meaning of the ceremony, the import of the token, and the signification of the sign, must be apprehended by the recipient. As it constitutes a peculiar form of evidence concerning the divine will, a sure testimony of God's grace, a confirmation of his word, and a seal of his promise, the strong assurances of truth thus exhibited must be received by faith. And as living faith is the spiritual grace which can apprehend the truth conveyed by a symbol, and rely upon the evidence attested by a seal, it is properly demanded as the necessary condition and qualification for the reception of Baptism and its benefits.

Baptism exhibits and confirms truth in two ways, by sign and by statement, and addresses it to different organs. The eye is the organ through which the truth signified is received, the ear that through which the truth pronounced is received, the latter being the same mode which characterizes the proclamation and reception

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\* Apol., Art. VII.

of the truth when preached. But the internal organ and mode of the reception of the truth, whether symbolized or pronounced in the administration of the sacrament, or preached by the ambassador of Christ, is the same, viz., faith apprehending and confiding in the truth made known by each, according to its respective mode of operation. This is the Lutheran view of the sacraments. The generic conception which runs through them is truth; the informing idea which binds all their elements together is that of grace; the Spirit which pervades and imparts to them their inherent force is the Holy Ghost, and the spiritual capacity which distinguishes and appropriates to itself all their contents is faith.

This view of Baptism as a means of grace, according to which it exerts its influence through the supernatural power of the truth signified and declared by it, stands in contrast with several erroneous views concerning its efficacy, set forth and rejected by the Confessors. The first is that of Thomas and the Dominicans. They maintained that God had placed a spiritual, supernatural power in the water, and that in consequence thereof the sins of the recipient were washed away by the water, in an incomprehensible manner, and without regard to any other part connected with the administration of Baptism.

The second error rejected is that of Scotus and the Franciscans. They maintained that Baptism washes away sins, through the assistance of the divine will, through which such washing alone comes to pass, and not at all through the word and water.

The third error rejected is that of the Romanists. They held that Baptism, as a sacrament, produces justification in its recipients, *ex opere operato*, that is, by the mere outward performance of the work, without any apprehension of the mind, or good disposition or faith in the heart. The Scholastics explain it by the manner in which medicine acts upon the body. The force and blessed effects of Baptism lay locked up in the administration itself, like medicine in a box, and upon the bare application of which all its legitimate effects follow, as when a healing plaster is laid upon a wound.

The Council of Trent teaches, that the sacraments produce their effect, *ex opere operato*; that the grace of God was bound internally and necessarily to them, so that it is not received *through* them but *in* them. Their efficacy or working is therefore always objectively and necessarily bound to them, wherever and whenever the admin-

istration of them is properly celebrated. Their effect does not take place sometimes and upon some persons, but always and upon all persons to whom they are administered. Their efficacy grows out of the matter and form of the sacramental transaction itself; it is specifically its own, and works necessarily through the mere observance thereof. Their benefits depend upon the act itself, its proper administration and reception, and not upon the state of the mind, disposition or spirit of the recipient. Baptism, as a sacrament, impresses once, and for all time, an indelible character upon the soul. The manner in which Baptism operates and produces the justification, regeneration, and salvation of its subjects, may be characterized as objective and arbitrary, physical and materialistic, magical and mechanical, mysterious and incomprehensible, necessary and irresistible. And while it thus deposits its saving contents into the soul of its recipient, it becomes efficacious, independent of his having either a spiritual apprehension of its symbolic meaning, or true faith in its word of promise. In other words, it exerts its saving power *ex opere operato*.

#### ITS EFFECTS.

The effects or benefits of Baptism, in so far as adults are concerned, are not specifically stated by the Confessors in the Ninth Article of the Confession, but they are described with a considerable degree of precision and comprehensiveness in other portions of their symbolical writings. In answer to the question: "What are the gifts or benefits of Baptism?" the Small Catechism says: "It worketh the forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and confers everlasting salvation upon all who believe as the word and promise of God declare." In the edition of the Augsburg Confession of 1530, the Confessors declared that "Original sin is truly sin, which brings all those under the eternal wrath of God, who are not born again by Baptism and the Holy Spirit." In the German edition of 1533, Melancthon modified the concluding phrase as follows: "who are not regenerated by Baptism and faith in Christ, through the gospel and the Holy Spirit." In the Apology he quotes Luther as teaching, "that Holy Baptism extirpates and removes the entire guilt and hereditary debt (Erbpflicht) of original sin, although the material (as they call it) of the sin, viz. the evil propensity and lust, remain." In the same sense Augustine is also

quoted as saying: "Original sin is forgiven in Baptism—not that it becomes extinct, but it is not imputed."

In reply to the question: "How can water produce such great effects?" the Small Catechism says: "It is not the water, indeed, that produces these effects, but the word of God, which accompanies and is connected with the water, and our faith, which relies on the word of God connected with the water. For the water, without the word of God, is simply water, and no Baptism. But when connected with the word of God, it is a Baptism, that is, a gracious water of life, and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says to Titus, iii. 5-8."

Melanchthon quotes Luther in the Apology as maintaining "that the Holy Ghost, given through Baptism, begins daily to mortify and blot out the remaining evil desires in us, and puts into the heart a new light, a new mind and spirit." And further: "that original sin as it remains after Baptism is, in itself, not indifferent, but that we need Christ, the Mediator, in order that God may not impute it unto us, and the constant light and operation of the Holy Spirit, to mortify and remove it." And in corroboration of these opinions of Luther, the Apology cites the following passage from Augustine: "The law which is in our members is put away by spiritual regeneration, and yet remains in the flesh, which is mortal. It is put away, for the guilt is entirely remitted through the sacrament (Baptism) by which the believers are born anew; and yet it remains, for it produces evil desires against which the believers strive."

Baptism, as thus set forth, was regarded by the Confessors as a means of washing away original, and of sealing the pardon of actual sin, as well as a means of imparting the Holy Spirit, through whose agency the soul is born anew and sanctified by faith in the truth as it is in Jesus. The explanation given of the manner in which Baptism confers these benefits accords with the mode in which the sacraments, as means of grace, produce their saving effects as already described.

The Scriptural doctrine of regeneration is set forth in the following passages: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." James i. 18. "In Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel." 1 Cor. iv. 15. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom



of God." John iii. 5. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." Gal. iii. 26. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." 1 John v. 1. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 12, 13. These passages, with their parallels, declare the absolute necessity of regeneration to salvation. They teach that the gospel as the word of truth is the instrument, the ambassador of Christ, the medium of communication, the Holy Spirit the divine agent, and faith the spiritual exercise of mind in connection with which it ordinarily takes place. The doctrine of regeneration thus taught, the Confessors set forth clearly and unequivocally in the Symbolical Books. They declare in the Apology that "the natural man is and remains an enemy of God, until by the power of the Holy Ghost, through the word preached and heard, he is converted, endowed with faith, regenerated and renewed." This faith is not a natural faculty, capable of obtaining a "mere historic knowledge of Christ," but a spiritual grace, wrought by the Holy Spirit, which comprehends the word and promise of Christ, awakens the "conviction" of their truthfulness, "receives" and "firmly cleaves" to them, and "trusts in Christ, who was given to atone for the sins of the world, as the only Mediator and Redeemer." And where this faith exists, "we are regenerated by it, and through it we receive the Holy Ghost into our hearts, who renews them, and thus enables us to keep the law of God, to fear and love him." "He who thus believes, rightly apprehends the great beneficent work of Christ, becomes a new creature; and prior to the existence of such faith in the heart, no one can fulfil the law."

Baptism, as a sacrament, was held by the Confessors to be a means through which, as well as the word, God imparts the Holy Spirit, who in his own time and place works faith in them that apprehend its true significance, and believe the promise of God connected with it. Baptism is consequently not a new species of instrumentality, producing its effects in an arbitrary manner, but it is a means belonging to the same species as the word, through which the Holy Spirit excites, confirms and strengthens faith, in the same manner as he does through the word. The analogy between the manner in which the word and the sacraments as external signs



produce their effects, explained by Melancthon in the Apology, is also set forth by Luther. In his Larger Catechism, he teaches that Baptism signifies the "mortification of the old Adam, and afterwards the rearing up of the new man. For in this Baptism the Holy Spirit, grace and virtue are given to suppress the old man, that the new man may come forth and increase in strength." But in order that "the gifts and benefits" of Baptism may be received, it is necessary that the import of "the application of water" should be "apprehended," and the pronunciation of the words of promise comprehended and "believed" with all the "heart." In this manner the soul enters through faith at Baptism upon "the new life," and through "repentance demonstrates and practices it."

In order that the full significance of Baptism may be comprehended, it must be contemplated as a whole. As instituted by Christ, it is a religious ordinance. Its elements are water and the word, its administrator the minister of God, its agent the Holy Spirit. As thus constituted it is revealed to man with the conditions upon the fulfilment of which he may secure all its benefits. These conditions are all met by faith. It comprehends its meaning as a "visible word," it relies upon its promise of pardon, it submits to its administration, and it pledges obedience to its authoritative commands. In being baptized, the Christian, on his part, makes a profession of his faith, enters into covenant with God, confesses the name of Christ before men, unites with his Church, and consecrates himself to his service—and God, on his part, places the seal of his covenant upon him, assures him of the remission of his sins, and grants him the gift of the Holy Ghost, that he may be strengthened with might in the inner man, "and kept through faith by the power of God unto salvation." As Baptism comprehends the truth of God, the Spirit of God, and the faith of God, whatever may be predicated of the word, as the means of the Spirit, in working faith and in securing its justifying, regenerating, sanctifying and saving effects, may also be predicated of Baptism. Accordingly, the Scriptures declare that the Word is "the incorruptible seed" of regeneration, and Baptism "the washing of regeneration;" that man must be "born again by the word," and "born of water," that is of Baptism; that the Church is "sanctified by the word" and cleansed by Baptism, as a "washing of water;" and that the redeemed are saved by the word, and saved by Baptism, through faith in the word and faith in Baptism.

“What God hath, therefore, joined together” in Baptism, “let no man put asunder” by rational speculation. Through an analytical process, its constituent parts may be separated and contemplated in isolation. The water may be separated from the word, the word may be separated from the Spirit, the administrator may be uninvested with authority, and the subject may be destitute of faith. By divesting the water of its significance, the word of its supernatural power, the administrator of authority, and the recipient of faith, Baptism is destroyed, and a human ceremony substituted in its stead and called by its name. And when this process of disintegration has been completed, the theological vandal can with impunity ask: How can a handful of water applied to the head, and a few words addressed by the minister to the ear, wash away sin, renew the heart, and save the soul? But as the Scriptures reveal no such Baptism and contain no affirmations concerning the efficacy of such a ceremony, the question becomes absurd and needs no answer.

Nor must the efficacy of Baptism be limited to time. It must, of necessity, be administered, but its benefits are by no means confined to the time of its administration. Baptism was the means of imparting the extraordinary influences of the Holy Ghost; but they were not given in the moment of its reception. The disciples of John, whom Paul met at Ephesus, were baptized, but received the Holy Spirit immediately afterwards through the laying on of hands. While Peter was speaking at the house of Cornelius, the Holy Spirit fell on his hearers, and he commanded them subsequently to be baptized. Christ received the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove after his baptism in Jordan, and the Apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, in the form of cloven tongues of fire, without the application of water. Baptism was also the means of imparting the ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit. Peter said to the inquirers at Pentecost: “Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” These influences of the Spirit were, however, frequently imparted through the word received by faith, and not during the time of the administration of Baptism. The eleven Apostles, of whose Baptism no record was made in the New Testament, received the ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit through faith in the word and call of Jesus. And the same may be affirmed of the

great majority of the adult members of the churches organized by the Apostles. Baptism is also the means of conferring the remission of sins. Peter preached a baptism "for the remission of sins," and Paul was commanded by Ananias to "arise, be baptized and wash away his sins," thus receiving, as an adult, the "seal of righteousness of faith" in Baptism, which, as a child, he had received in circumcision.

But its sealing power was not limited to the period of its reception. That remained in full force, and could be appropriated by repentance through subsequent life. There is consequently nothing of a temporary character connected with Baptism. It is not a religious ceremony producing a magical effect during the time of its performance, but it is a divine ordinance, constituted with imperishable elements, and clothed with perpetual efficacy. In accordance with these views, Luther says: "The same words of God once pronounced in the first Baptism endure forever, so that they can afterwards rely on these words if they desire; and the water is poured over them, to enable them also afterwards to comprehend it in faith if they wish." He regarded Baptism not as something isolated and transient, notwithstanding the fact that the external administration soon takes place; but as a permanent and enduring transaction, exerting its influence upon the individual believer from the beginning to the end of his life, and upon the Church, as the general assembly of the saints, unto the end of the world.

The effects or benefits which Baptism confers upon children, are briefly stated by the Confessors. In the Latin edition, they say that "children, being offered to God by Baptism, are received into God's favor." In the German edition they affirm that children, by "Baptism, are presented to God, and become acceptable to him." This language is generic, and no clear and unmistakable explanation of its precise meaning is given in other parts of the Symbolical Books. This resulted doubtless from the fact, that the inspired writers nowhere explain the specific effects which take place in the mind and heart of the infant at its Baptism, nor describe in detail the benefits conferred upon it thereby. These effects must therefore be determined rather from analogy, implication and the necessity of the case, than from didactic statements contained in the Scriptures. On this account the subject is involved in more or less obscurity, and beset with grave difficulties. This the Confessors felt, and con-

sequently did not attempt to make a specific and full deliverance on the subject, but satisfied themselves with the general statement quoted above.

The difficulties connected with the determination of the effects of Infant Baptism, and the manner in which they are produced, were vehemently urged by the Anabaptists and constantly felt by Luther. He had rejected the *opus operatum* theory of the Romanists, and adopted the evangelical theory of the efficacy of the sacraments, according to which the benefits of Baptism can only be received through faith apprehending the truth signified, by the application of the element, confiding in the promise of God repeated in its administration, and obeying the command of God enjoined in the words of its institution. His efforts were accordingly directed to the origination of hypotheses by the aid of which he attempted to explain the effects of Baptism, and the manner in which they are produced in infants, as consistent with the manner in which the same effects are produced in adults, viz., by faith. He at first maintained that children believe in a technical sense, but subsequently admitted that they have not baptismal faith in the evangelical sense, and helped them out by substituting the faith of the Church, which presents them for Baptism. He also held that through the power of the prayers of the believing Church, God infuses faith into the child, and attributes the production of the same effect to the operation of the Holy Spirit through the word of God spoken in the baptismal act. These hypotheses, however, neither silenced the Anabaptists nor satisfied Luther. He was accordingly led, in the year 1528, to make a thorough re-investigation of the whole subject in the light of the Holy Scriptures, the result of which was a modification of his views and the full development of his doctrine of Infant Baptism.

Baptism is an ordinance of God. Its validity depends not upon the faith or worthiness of the recipient, but upon its divine institution. Its *essence* consists of the element and word, through which its *power* is exerted by the Holy Ghost. As thus constituted, it is clothed with objective force, which faith may sooner or later appropriate. Its *validity* stands fast whether faith be present or not, but its *beneficial effects* can only be fully realized by faith. He still holds that children have faith, and that the contrary cannot be proved, but he hands the discussion of the question over to the doctors. In 1523 he had said to the Bohemian Waldensians, "It



would be better to baptize no child any where, than to baptize without faith;" but in 1528 in writing on Anabaptism he said: "Faith indeed is not for the promotion of Baptism, but Baptism for the promotion of faith. Now, when faith comes, Baptism has what it requires, and rebaptism is useless." And he predicates the Baptism of children not upon their hypothecated faith, but upon the command of God, who calls them to himself and authorizes them to be baptized. Baptism is a prevenient movement of God towards the child, through which he makes a presentation of grace and adopts it into his family. Universal grace revealed in the gospel specializes and individualizes itself in Baptism, so that personal faith, whenever it may be exercised, does not arise from the natural ability of man, but is called forth through the prevenient grace of God, which is objectively presented and revealed in the sacrament. He holds that the effects of Baptism commence in the child with its administration, according to the degree of lively susceptibility possessed by it, without determining, however, how far this extends. This susceptibility he calls faith, and regards it as constituting the new birth. "The spiritual birth," says he in his sermon on Baptism, "takes its rise, indeed, in Baptism, proceeds and increases; but only in the last day is its significance fulfilled; only in death are we rightly lifted out of Baptism by the angels into eternal life."

In the study of nature, the truth of a theory can only be demonstrated by proving that all the facts pertaining to the subject are consistent with and can be readily interpreted by it. And the same method is required to establish the truth of a theory in theology. The theory of Infant Baptism must, therefore, be consistent with and interpret all that is declared in the Scriptures concerning the state, capacities, and relations of children. This Luther felt and made the attempt to accomplish. Having adopted the theory that the exercise of evangelical faith was indispensable to the reception of the benefits of Baptism in an adult, he at first maintained that children became partakers of its blessings in the same way, that is, by faith. He accordingly adopted the hypothesis that children have faith. In the Larger Catechism he says: "With respect to Infant Baptism, we bring forward the child under the impression and the hope that it believes." If this means that children in their natural state have faith, it contradicts the declaration made in the Second Article of the Confession, on Original Sin, "that all men who



are naturally engendered are conceived and born in sin; that they are all, from their mother's womb, full of evil desires and propensities, and can have by nature no true fear of God, no true faith in God."

Luther also adopted the hypothesis that faith is infused into children through the faith and prayers of the Church. "The young children," says he, "are through the faith and prayers of the Church, purified from unbelief and the devil, and gifted with faith, and accordingly baptized." But this method of infusing a faith that purifies and renews the child, differs from that in which faith is said to be wrought by the Holy Spirit through the preached word in the Fifth Article of the Augsburg Confession, and accords much more nearly with the spiritualistic conception of the Anabaptists, that the Spirit operates directly and independently of the word. Luther also adopted the hypothesis that faith was imparted to the child in Baptism, through the words uttered at its administration. The sound of the word of God spoken strikes outwardly upon the ear of the child, through which the Holy Spirit, who is almighty, and to whom nothing is deaf, imparts to it faith, that is, a greater susceptibility for the word of God. But as the child cannot comprehend the meaning of the sound of the words spoken, the effect attributed to them must be produced mechanically, and savors more of the magical operation of the Romish *opus operatum* than the method of the Scriptures, according to which faith cometh by a hearing, which apprehends the meaning of the word heard.

Luther uses the word faith as applied to children in a technical sense. In the Wittenberg Concordia he describes it as follows: "It must not be thought that the children have understood (the word), but there are the movements and inclinations to believe the Lord Christ and to love God, in some measure similar to the movements of those who otherwise have faith and love; and it is in this way that we desire to be understood when we say that the children have personal faith." He distinguishes between faith as a condition or state of natural susceptibility for God, his word and Spirit, and faith as an act or exercise intelligently and consciously appropriating the grace offered through the word and the sacrament, and explains it as a latent power of reception which is set into activity by Baptism, analogous to the faith of adults in sleep.

These various shades of thought presented by the different forms of expression employed, indicate the impossibility of originating a

satisfactory explanation of the subject. Of a "latent power of reception" in contradistinction from the rational powers with which God has endowed every child, and through the possession of which it becomes a cultivatable being, we can form no distinct conception. And as a change in the susceptibility is conditioned, according to the rational constitution of man, upon a change in the radical disposition in which it inheres; and as a change in the radical disposition can only take place through an intelligent movement or disposing of the mind, the awakening of a spiritual susceptibility for God, his word and Spirit, cannot take place without self-conscious and intelligent action; and as infants are incapable of such voluntary action, it is impossible to understand how a spiritual susceptibility in which "inclinations to believe Christ and to love God" arise, can be produced in their hearts through Baptism. All this Luther himself felt and acknowledged. While he still held that it was reasonable to maintain that children do believe, he admits in his letter on Anabaptism that it is "unknown to us how they believe, or how faith is wrought in them;" and then adds, "and yet, after all, this is of little importance."

The following paragraph taken from the same letter presents the scriptural arguments by which Luther attempted to prove that children can believe. "But we have Scripture to establish the fact that children may and can believe, even if they have neither language nor cultivated reason. As the Scripture says, the Jews, 'sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils and shed innocent blood.' Ps. cvi. 37, 38. If it were innocent blood, as the text says, they were certainly pure and holy children, and such children they could not be without the Spirit and faith. Again, the innocent children, Matt. ii. 16, were not over two years old, and undoubtedly destitute of language or cultivated reason; yet they are now holy and happy. And Christ, Matt. xix. 14, says in reference to little children, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' And St. John in his mother's womb was a child, Lk. i. 41, and I am of opinion indeed that he could believe."

The argument is not direct, but inferential. It is not expressly stated that any of the children referred to believed. As none of them were baptized, faith could not have been infused into them through Baptism. And if these passages prove that children in their natural state are "innocent," "pure and holy," filled with the

Holy Spirit, and morally fit for the kingdom of God on earth and in heaven, and from which it must be inferred that they have faith, then we cannot see how such an interpretation of the above passages can be harmonized with those passages which declare that children are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, receive not the things of the Spirit of God, and are by nature children of wrath. Nor can we reconcile such an interpretation with the representations made in the Apology, concerning the natural state of man. "We descendants of Adam are all so born as not to know God, that we despise him and do not trust in him; yea, that we flee from and hate him." We are born destitute of "original righteousness," that is with an "innate want of divine light and of every thing good, which continues so long as we are not born anew of the Holy Ghost and enlightened by him."

The Confessors regarded the world as fallen, corrupt, lying in wickedness, and doomed to destruction; and redemption as a great remedial movement, designed to secure the pardon, moral recovery and salvation of all men. As children were involved in the disabilities entailed by the fall of Adam, they are also included "in the promised redemption of Christ." As original sin exposes them to condemnation and the development of their depravity, provision must be made for their pardon and sanctification, both of which are accomplished through the atonement of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. As all men are depraved and sinful, "Christ tasted death for every man;" and the Spirit has been poured out "upon all flesh." As there was nothing good in man to induce God to originate the movements of grace towards him, so can there be nothing in man to limit their application, save voluntary unbelief and its concomitants and developments. As there is no voluntary unbelief or actual antagonism to God found in children, no moral barrier exists to prevent the grace of God from reaching and saving them. As the Scriptures reveal but "one Baptism for the remission of sins" and the bestowment of "the gift of the Holy Ghost," and as children are to be baptized with that Baptism, it must be the means of washing away their original sin and of imparting to them the Holy Spirit. In consistency with these views, the Confessors affirm in the Apology, that children are entitled "to the divine promises of grace (pardon) and of the Holy Spirit," that "in and with Baptism, universal grace and the treasures of the gospel are

offered to them ;" and that they are to be baptized "in order that they may become participants of the gospel and the promise of grace and salvation." This explains what they meant when they said in the Article under consideration, that through "Baptism the grace of God is offered," and that children, by being presented to God in Baptism, become "acceptable to him and are received into his favor." In other words, they held that through Baptism children were "born of water and of the Spirit," yea, "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise," who would, in his own time, place and manner, develop faith, as well as work in them "both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." The truth of this view may be argued from the following considerations :

1. *From the Necessity of the Case.* Children, as "born of the flesh," are by nature children of wrath ; and in order to be saved from perdition and qualified for heaven, they must become the subjects of pardoning mercy and regenerating grace. As "where sin abounded grace did much more abound," it follows, that to whatever penal consequences and depraving influences they became exposed through original sin entailed upon them by the fall of Adam, adequate provision hath been made to deliver them from its guilt and dominion through the redemption of Christ. As nearly one-half of the human race die in childhood, provision must be made for their justification and regeneration, and it is rational to conclude that God would devise some means adapted to its accomplishment. And as children were incapable of being "born again," like adults, through faith in the word, the Confessors believed that they were capable of being "born again of water and of the Spirit through holy Baptism." And if, according to the general opinion, God effects the pardon and regeneration of all unbaptized children who die in infancy, without means, in an extraordinary manner, it accords much more with his wisdom and goodness to conclude that he will make provision for accomplishing the same end through appropriate means. And if the approach of death becomes an adequate reason for an interposition of an extraordinary movement of grace towards them, their moral purification, usefulness and happiness in this life, as the precursor of that which is to come, becomes a more potent reason for a prevenient movement of grace towards them through Infant Baptism. And as by being "born of the flesh," they will "sow to the flesh," reap corruption and die ; by being



"born of water and of the Spirit," they will sow to the Spirit, and "from the Spirit reap everlasting life."

2. *From the progressive character of the work of fashioning and perfecting the new creature.* Man, under the operation of the workmanship of God, is created anew in Christ Jesus, and becomes a new creature. The terms begetment, quickening, birth and growth, which set forth the progressive stages in which, according to the laws of natural generation, the body of man is conceived and grows to maturity, are employed in a general sense by the inspired writers to exhibit the work of the new creation, and in their specific sense, they fitly describe the process in which, "according to the law of the Spirit of life," the new creature is fashioned, as well as the successive stages through which it must pass in order to attain perfection. And as Baptism is administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, it involves the supernatural begetment of the Father, the quickening of the Son, and the birth through the Spirit, as well as the subsequent workmanship of the Triune God, in fashioning the new creature into the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus. As the Confessors adopted this comprehensive conception of regeneration, as the work of the new creation, they believed, according to the analogy of Scripture, that as begetment involves all the natural forces, which in their development fashion the old man in Adam, Baptism involves all the supernatural forces, which in their development form and perfect the new man in Christ Jesus.

3. *From the True Conception of Church Organization.* The Church of Christ is described in the Scriptures, not as a mechanical aggregation, but as a living organism—as a vine, an olive tree, a body, a family, a kingdom. As such she is pervaded by a supernatural life, even the life of Christ. In nature, atoms in their natural state are unadapted to organization; but when brought into connection with a germ or life force, they are changed and assimilated by it, and incorporated into its body, and by such transformation alone can they become constituent parts of a living body. And to this there is a striking analogy in the sphere of the supernatural. It is not by mere accident that church organization is represented as an engrafting of branches into a vine or olive tree, and the insertion of members into an organized body. Even when the Church is represented as a house, building or temple composed of stones, the members are



declared to be "lively stones" with which there is "built up a spiritual house." Yea, Paul says to them, "ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit." Man in his natural condition is morally dead, and while he remains in his inorganic state, he is unfit for ecclesiastical organization. But when brought into contact with Christ as the life-force of redemption, he is quickened, changed, assimilated and incorporated as a living member into the Church, as his mystical body. Accordingly Paul declares that Christ is the head of the body, the Church; that all Christians "were baptized by one Spirit into one body;" that they thereby became "members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones;" and that through such a union with Christ, they would be able "to grow up in all things into him, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." This determines the qualifications, the means, the process and the results of church organization. Now, if it be the design of Christ that children should become members of his Church, as the Confessors believed, it becomes indispensable that they be transformed from a state of moral death into one of spiritual life. As the Baptism of water was the appointed means for imparting the Baptism of the Spirit to adults, and for preparing them for a living union with Christ, in his Church, and as according to divine appointment, the same means were to be applied to children, it follows that in order to meet the requirements of Church organization, and prepare them, as well as adults, to become true "members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones," their Baptism must also secure to them the gift of the Holy Ghost.

4. *From the Indispensable Conditions of Christian Nurture.* The process and possibilities of Christian nurture are set forth analogically in the Scriptures. Men cannot gather "grapes from thorns nor figs from thistles." "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." No one "can bring a clean thing out of an unclean;" "that which is born of the flesh remains flesh;" and "the evil man out of the evil

treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things." Now, as by no process of cultivation one species of plant can be so modified as to become, and to bring forth the fruits of another species, so by no process of natural culture or education can the depraved nature of man be changed, and the fruits of holiness brought forth by him.

Christian nurture consists in so cultivating the plants of grace in the husbandry of Christ, that they may flourish as trees of righteousness, and in so feeding the lambs of Christ that they may become the sheep of his fold. In other words, it consists in so training the children of the covenant, that they may grow up into Christ, and be thoroughly furnished unto every good work as members of his Church. But without the provision of supernatural agency and instrumentality, capable of transforming tares into wheat, goats into lambs, and the children born of the flesh into children born of the Spirit, spiritual growth, as the product of Christian nurture, becomes absolutely impossible. Such provision the Confessors maintained was made through the means of grace, Baptism securing the renewing agency of the Spirit, and the word furnishing the instrument of Christian nurture.

Stier in his "Words of the Lord Jesus," Vol. VIII, p. 317, expresses his views of the relation of Infant Baptism to Christian nurture as a theologian, and his feelings as a father, in the following explicit terms: "That there should be a Church which receives and educates children; that there should be a baptizer, acknowledging and representing the faith of the mother-church, who would invoke for them the Triune God—is necessary, but it is also enough. Thus the grace of him that calleth (that the fulfilment may not come behind the type, Rom. ix. 11,) the germ out of which the tree of their Christian life is developed under spiritual culture, is one necessary foundation of Christian *education*—of their nurture *in* Christ, and not merely *into* Christ. As a Christian father, I could never regard one of my children as still standing without the grace of regeneration, and not yet taken into the covenant and promise through the sacrament appointed *to that end*. The higher my estimation of this, the more deeply do I feel its need for my children as for myself; and moreover, I have no notion of any such education, as should, apart from the divine foundation, prepare them for and lead them to Baptism. The more stress we are in fact obliged to lay upon the blessing, the sanctification and the union with the Church, of a child

growing up in strict Christian culture, the more must his subsequent Baptism lose of its importance; it must in fact appear to be a mere supplementary ceremony of water."

5. *From the Declarations of Christ concerning the manner in which little children are made meet for the kingdom of God.* The instructions given by Jesus Christ—in regard to the relation of children to his Kingdom or Church, heretofore quoted, establish the logical connection of the following propositions, viz: that children born of the flesh will, until born of the Spirit, develop the moral characteristics of the flesh, remain among the "lost" and "perish;" that it is not the will of God that one such little child should perish, and that Christ came to seek and to save them; that in order to be saved they must enter the kingdom of heaven, they must be "born of water and of the Spirit," and that to effect this new birth, a supernatural instrumentality must be originated and applied to them by divine agency; that Baptism has been appointed by Christ as the means, and the Holy Spirit sent as the agent for its accomplishment; that Christ having commanded his Apostles to make disciples, by baptizing them in his name and receiving them into his kingdom, also enjoined that little children should be received by them in his name; and as there is no other way of doing this revealed in the Scriptures, except through Baptism, they did baptize the children of believing parents and receive them also into his kingdom; that children thus received in his name came to Christ, received the kingdom of heaven, and became members of it; that having entered the kingdom of heaven through Baptism, they must have been "born of water and of the Spirit;" that adults must first be converted in order to possess the same gracious qualifications for receiving and entering the kingdom of heaven; and that the kingdom of heaven, as constituted by Christ, consists of baptized children, and of adults who, through conversion, become spiritually like them. The logical connection of these propositions cannot be broken except by a violation of the rules of sound reasoning, nor can the conclusion which they demonstrate be resisted, save by the adoption of Anabaptist and Pelagian sentiments.

Christ did not, indeed, baptize the little children with water, but received them into his arms, laid his hands on them and blessed them. This could not have been an empty ceremony, but was much rather a verification of the promise of the Abrahamic cove-

nant. That promise was: "In thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Christ was the seed of Abraham (Gal. iii); he redeemed man in order "that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles," and that they "might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." "The blessing of Abraham" was, consequently, the Holy Spirit. The Son received from the Father "the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 33), and ministered or dispensed the Spirit (Gal. iii. 5). As Christ baptized the Apostles with the Holy Ghost, through "cloven tongues, like as of fire," and thus fulfilled the promise of the Spirit made unto them; as Peter expressly declared that "the promise" of the Spirit, which was "the blessing of Abraham," pertained also to "children" (Acts ii. 39), as Christ, who ministereth the Spirit, laid his hands on them and blessed them, and as by the laying on of hands, the Apostles dispensed the Spirit, the Confessors believed, that Jesus, the seed of Abraham, "blessed" the children with "the blessing of Abraham," that is, with the Holy Spirit, thus fulfilling the promise of the covenant made with Abraham, and preparing them for and admitting them into his kingdom.

6. *From the Specific Office of Baptism as a Divine Ordinance.* While Baptism belongs to the same species of instrumentality as the word and the Lord's Supper, it is, nevertheless, not identical with either of them. As a means of grace, it is distinguished from the word. Through the written word remission of sins is preached and the Holy Spirit offered to all who repent and believe; through Baptism, the "visible word," the remission of sins is sealed and the gift of the Holy Ghost conferred upon the individual believer. The promise of universal grace is repeated whenever the eye rests upon the sacred page, or the lips of the preacher open to proclaim it, and the sound thereof reverberates throughout all the earth, but the promise of personal grace offered by Baptism is never repeated, but concentrated upon the individual, and stands good and available to him through life. As a sacrament, Baptism is also distinguished from the Holy Eucharist. Like the Lord's Supper, it is a symbol: the Supper proclaiming the Lord's death—Baptism exhibiting the cleansing power of his blood, the washing away of sins. Like the Lord's Supper, it is a communion: the Supper the communion of the body and blood of Christ—Baptism the communion of the Holy Ghost. Now, as the specific office of the Lord's Supper was the



communion of the body and blood of Christ, broken and shed for the remission of sins, the specific office of Baptism is the communion of the Holy Spirit, who washes away all sin. If Paul could, therefore, truly say: "The bread which we break—is it not the communion of the body of Christ? the cup of blessing which we bless—is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" he might just as truly have said: The water which we pour, in the name of him who "ministereth the Spirit"—is it not the communion of the Holy Ghost? As advocates of Infant Baptism, the Confessors did not believe that Baptism, when administered to children, lost its essential constituents and became an empty ceremony; but, on the contrary, maintained that it retained its specific office, and, consequently, must wash away their original sin, and confer upon them the Holy Spirit.

7. *From the Sacramental Interpretation of the Passages of Scripture relating to Baptism.* "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." "The Ark, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water, the like figure whereunto, even Baptism, doth also now save us." In these passages a certain relation is declared to exist between Baptism and the birth and renewal of the Spirit, sanctification and salvation. What the precise nature of the relation is, is not expressly stated. According to the Romish view of the sacraments, the relation is that of cause and effect, and the operation magical; according to the Zwinglian, the relation is that of symbol and thing symbolized, and the operation merely exhibitiv; according to the Lutheran, the relation is that of a means to an end, and the operation sacramental. These divergent views have given rise to three distinct methods of interpretation, the literal, figurative, and sacramental. The Confessors adopted the sacramental interpretation, according to which Baptism becomes the medium of communicating the Holy Spirit to both children and adults, through which and the word, as means of grace, he works faith, effects the new birth and renewal, sanctification and salvation. And this interpretation is epexegeti-



cal of the baptismal formula, according to which, to be baptized INTO *the name* of the Triune God, is to be baptized into communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Entertaining this profound view, Stier says: "Thus this NAME, and in and with it, the uttered, attested, revealed *nature* of God, is actually the wonderful virtue of the water of Baptism as bound up in the institution for all futurity, the true water of the word (Eph. v. 26) in which the Church is further to be cleansed and sanctified unto perfection. Beginning, sum and kernel of this word is the *name* of God, in which life and power are communicated by means of the Spirit. \* \* And because the Father and Son work upon and within men, and enter them by the Holy Spirit, this third name is here the decisive and completing name. Therefore the first promise made in baptism at the beginning ran quite rightly, "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." But we also know in what way apostolic doctrine interchangeably supplements the words—"The baptized are incorporated into the Son (1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27; Rom. vi.) and have put Him on, that is, finally, as the children of God, *the Father*." The words of the Great Commission, authorizing the baptism of all nations INTO the name of the Triune God, involve, according to their true import, being baptized into the communion of the Holy Ghost, as well as into the fellowship of the Father, and of his Son, Jesus Christ.

This is the doctrine of "baptismal grace" (*tauf gnade*) held by the Confessors. The grace offered and imparted through Baptism embraces specifically the Holy Spirit, and with him, generally, all the promises of the gospel. Children through such Baptism are offered to God, become acceptable to him, and are received into his favor. The phrase employed to designate the effect of the reception of the Holy Ghost, and through which they become acceptable to God, and qualified for the kingdom of heaven, is that of the new birth. Hence they call Baptism "a laver of regeneration," and speak of being "born again by Baptism and the Holy Spirit." While these phrases are specifically applied to adults, who are born again by faith, and fully explained in exhibiting the doctrine of regeneration, there is no such specific application and explanation made of them to children, and their general reference to them is explained by the general terms quoted above. This proves the caution of the Confessors as well as their moderation, in setting forth the benefits of Infant Baptism.

The individual sentiments of the Confessors, on the efficacy and benefits of Infant Baptism, are more fully expressed in their other writings. Melancthon, who worded the Ninth Article of the Confession and explained more fully its meaning in the Apology, in discussing the subject of Pædo-baptism, expresses himself as follows: "In and by Baptism the Holy Spirit is given to children, who operates in them according to their measure (*masse*) or capacity, as he operated on John in the womb of Elizabeth. And although there is a difference between the old and the young, inasmuch as the old are attentive to the works, still the influences of the Spirit are, in both old and young, a tendency towards God." Luther, in explaining the effects of Baptism, confines himself mainly to the interpretation of the declarations of Scripture concerning the new creation, as the special work of the Holy Spirit. As man is naturally "dead in sin," Luther held that God through the grace of Baptism, "constitutes out of the old, inanimate man, a saint with a new principle of life." As all men, born of the flesh, must be born of the Spirit, he believed that "the spiritual birth took its rise in Baptism as the washing of regeneration." As all men must put off the old and put on the new man, he maintained that "in Baptism the Holy Spirit, grace and virtue are given to suppress the old man, that the new may come forth and increase." As all men who are alive in sin must die unto sin and live to God, he taught that "we are buried with Christ by Baptism into death, that like as he rose from the dead, so we also should walk in newness of life." The work of the new creation, as above described, involves a spiritual quickening, spiritual birth, spiritual mortification, and spiritual growth on earth, culminating in spiritual perfection in heaven. And as this is especially the work of the Holy Spirit, conferred through Baptism, Luther held that the Spirit commenced the new birth with its administration by imparting "a new principle of life" and awakening a "lively susceptibility for God," which he calls faith.

Reinhard says, that the position that faith is imparted to children through Baptism is to many Lutheran theologians objectionable, involves no insignificant difficulties, and cannot be established from the Scriptures. Good says that while "the early divines of the Protestant churches did not generally adopt precisely Luther's view, and express themselves as if they considered an infant capable of the acts of faith, they did speak of an infant as capable of the

seed, or principle, or incipient stage of faith." Heim, the Wurtemberg pastor, writes, as quoted by Stier, "The Reformers with all their deep conviction of the internal character of Christianity, were yet, in respect to their understanding of the truth, too much bound up in externality of thought and discursive reasoning. Hence it came to pass that the question was agitated with so much asperity, whether children could have faith, for while this contradicts the natural reason of man, it yet could not be denied, according to the notions of the old theologians, without making Baptism a mere empty formality, or a merely conditional assurance for the future. The simple answer would have been, that by Baptism itself the germ, from which the tree of faith would grow, was placed in the soul as the seed of life from God." The same view was held by Calvinistic divines. Calvin maintains "a seed of faith in infants;" Ursinus "an inclinatory faith." Voetius holds that "there is in them a root, faculty, supernatural principle, seed or nursery, from whence in its own time faith springs up." Peter Martyr says that faith in infants is "incipient in its principle and root, inasmuch as they have the Holy Spirit, whence faith and all virtues flow forth." While all Lutherans regard Baptism as a means of grace, they also believe that when administered to children, according to the Scriptures, it does not lose its essential characteristics and become an empty ceremony, but that it performs its specific office, as the medium of imparting to them special blessings. But in the specific enumeration of these blessings, and the explanation of the precise effects produced by them in the minds and hearts of children, they express themselves in different terms.

Dr. C. F. Schaeffer (*Evangelical Review*, Vol. VIII., p. 339,) says: "We do not therefore insist on the word *Faith*, when we desire to designate the effect produced in the babe's soul by Baptism through the operation of the Spirit; \* \* we simply ascertain from the Scriptures the fact itself, that in Baptism a change influencing a child's moral nature has been actually wrought, and this change, which tends to render the child acceptable to God, may analogically be called *Faith*; or inasmuch as this change actually amounts to the production of a spiritual life in the soul, we may call it a spiritual birth, or adopting the Scripture term denominate it *regeneration*."

Dr. C. P. Krauth (*Conservative Reformation*, p. 579,) explains it as follows: "Faith as an *act*, like sin as an act, presupposes a *condi-*

tion of mind, which condition is the principal thing in both cases, to which the act is merely phenomenal. \* \* By nature the infant is as really a sinner, and by grace as really a believer, as the adult is, though it can neither *do* sin nor *exercise* faith. It *has* sin by nature and it *has* faith by grace. Working out under the law of the first condition, it will inevitably *do* sin, as under the law of the second, it will *exercise* faith. Faith justifies by its *receptivity* alone. There is no justifying merit in faith as an act, nor is there any in the acts it originates. In the adult it is divinely wrought, it 'is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.' In the infant there is wrought by God, through the Holy Ghost, by means of the water and the word, that *receptivity* of condition, which it has not by nature. The Holy Ghost offers grace, and so changes the moral nature of the child, that this nature becomes receptive of the grace offered. This divinely wrought condition we call receptive faith, and though its phenomena are suspended, it is really faith, and involves what is essential to justification, as does the faith of the adult."

Dr. B. Kurtz (Infant Baptism, p. 156, 157), bears the following testimony: "We have already remarked that we do not feel warranted to define the nature and measure of this blessing (viz. that of Baptism). It may be, for aught we know, the gift of the Holy Ghost, in those secret spiritual influences, by which the actual regeneration of those children who die in infancy is effected, and which is a *seed of life* in those who are spared, to prepare them for instruction in the word of God, as they are taught it by parental care, to incline their will and affections to good, and to begin and maintain in them the war against inward and outward evil, so that they may be divinely assisted, as reason strengthens, to make their calling and election sure." \* \*

\* \* "Baptism is, in an eminent degree, the emblem of moral purification by the new birth, and may even become the blessed means of that birth. But the uniform agent in effecting that birth, is the Holy Spirit. These remarks appear to favor the notion, that the influences of the Spirit may possibly constitute the blessing conveyed to children at their Baptism. That those influences become immediately active is not maintained by us, because the infant is not as yet a moral agent, or capable of intelligent or responsible action; but so soon as he arrives at the age of discretion, he may seriously meditate on his relations as a member of the Church, and



the blessing imparted at his Baptism may become effectual to his conversion and salvation, or if he die before he reaches that age, the same blessing may become alike efficient, in renewing his nature and qualifying him for heaven."

Dr. S. S. Schmucker, in his *Popular Theology*, p. 273, 274, teaches that the Scriptures represent Baptism to adult believers "as a means for obtaining the remission of sins," and also "as a means of regeneration." It is termed the washing of regeneration, and yet it is admitted that regeneration is effected by the Holy Spirit through the means. The agency of the Spirit is distinctly associated by the Saviour himself with Baptism, one of whose special advantages consists "in the immediate influences of the Holy Spirit." "Baptism in infants (Definite Synodical Platform, p. 31) is the pledge of the bestowment of those blessings purchased by Christ for all." "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." And "the promise is to you and your children," Acts ii. 39. Those blessings are forgiveness of sins, or exemption from the penal consequences of natural depravity, (which would at least be exclusion from heaven, on account of moral disqualification for admission,) reception into the visible Church of Christ, grace to help in every time of need, and special provision for the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to which parents pledge themselves."

He had taught (*Pop. Theol.*, p. 148) that as "the atonement not only delivered its subjects from punishment, but purchased for them a title for heaven, it follows that children (who are embraced in it) not having lost their title by voluntary unbelief, will for Christ's sake enjoy the benefit of it, that is, that at death their corruptible nature shall be transformed into an incorruptible, and their mortal into an immortal one, and they, liberated from their moral disease, be ushered into the blissful presence of Him who said: 'Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

Now, as God would thus remove the guilt and corruption of original sin from unbaptized children dying in infancy, in an extraordinary manner without means, and as the specific office of Baptism is to seal the remission of sins and confer the Holy Spirit upon adults, consistency demands that it must, unless it ceases to be Baptism and becomes something else, perform the same office when administered to children. He accordingly admits that through Baptism God "bestows upon children forgiveness of sins" and "re-



moves their moral disqualification for admission into heaven," which can be nothing else but the application of the redemption remedy for their "moral disease" (natural depravity) through the influence of the Holy Spirit. If this be not his meaning, then his statement involves two insuperable difficulties. The first is that Baptism, when administered to children, must be split into two, the one-half, which seals the remission of original sin, being present, but the other half, which confers the Holy Spirit, being absent, and, of course, inoperative. The second difficulty is that if Baptism only removes the penal consequences of original sin, and fails to provide grace to overcome the dominion of its sinful influence, through the Holy Spirit, it would provide only for one of the evils entailed by original sin, and leave the other, no less important, unprovided for, and present the baptized child in an anomalous condition in the moral universe, justified and saved from hell, but unregenerate and unfit for heaven. And the declaration that Baptism furnishes the child with "grace to help in every time of need," must prove delusive unless it confers the Holy Spirit, through whose influence alone it can be born of God, and trained as his child, through Christian nurture in the Church of Christ. But that Dr. Schmucker did mean what we have said, is clear from the declaration made by him in his *Lutheran Manual*, p. 141, "As to the benefits of Baptism to children, it may be said that, in addition to being admitted by it into the visible Church of Christ, and securing the advantages of a religious Christian education, this ordinance confers on them all the other benefits that it does on adults (including, of course, remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost) so far as they are capable of receiving them."

As the operations of the Holy Spirit, in regeneration, are mysterious and incomprehensible, the effects produced by him, through Baptism, on the soul of an infant, can not be described. The representations quoted above, that, in baptism, there is a new principle, faculty or life implanted, or a supernatural germ, seed or root deposited in the soul of the child, must, therefore, be regarded as human efforts to explain what the inspired writers and the Confessors left unexplained. The hypotheses that children have faith, and that it is infused into them by baptism, and the explanations given by the theologians just named, of this peculiar species of faith, savor more of the Romish than of the Lutheran view of the sacraments. And

the fact that the advocates of these doubtful speculations appeal to Matt. xviii. 5, 6, and Tit. iii. 5 in support of them, proves to what straits they are reduced to find any scripture warrant for their opinions. The appropriation of these passages to such a use is inconsistent with their context, contradicted by the analogy of faith, and rejected by many of the most distinguished expositors and theologians.\*

The Lutheran doctrine of "Baptismal grace," is also taught in the catechism and liturgies adopted by the General Synod. In the "Order of Salvation," the following questions and answers occur. 88. "How does the Holy Ghost enlighten and sanctify us?" "The Holy Ghost works in us faith in Christ, and makes us entirely new creatures." 92. "When did the Holy Ghost begin this sanctification in you?" "In the holy ordinance of Baptism the Holy Ghost began this sanctification in me," Titus iii: 5, 7. 93. "What did God promise you in holy Baptism?" "God promised and also bestowed upon me, the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation," Acts ii. 38; 1 Pet. iii. 21. 94. "But what did you promise God?" "I promised that I would renounce the devil and all his works, and all his ways, and believe in God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," Rom. vi. 2, 3; James iv. 7; Hosea ii. 19, 20; Rev. ii. 10. 95. "Through whom did you make this promise in holy Baptism?" "I made this promise in holy Baptism through my parents, or sponsors." 96. "Are all baptized persons holy and pious?" "No, many fall from their baptismal covenant," 2 Pet. ii. 20, 22. 97. "Whereby does a person fall from his baptismal covenant?" "By wilful sin we fall from our baptismal covenant," Is. lix. 2. 99. "How can such a wilful sinner be sanctified again?" "He can be sanctified again through the word of God," John xvii. 7; James i. 21. 100. "But to what does the word of God exhort us?" "The word of God exhorts us to repentance and conversion," Matt. iii. 2; Acts ii. 38. Under the conviction that grace is offered in Baptism through the Holy Spirit, the following petitions are found in the baptismal formulas for infants in both the first and second liturgies of the General Synod. "And now, when he (she) has been baptized according to the institution of our blessed Redeemer, we pray that he (she) may also be regenerated by the Holy Spirit; that he (she)

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\* Consult Olshausen, Meyer, Stier, Neander, Baumgarten, Bengel, Paulus, Chrysostom, Calvin, Beza, Erasmus and Grotius.

may die unto sin, live unto righteousness, be incorporated into thy holy Church, and rendered a partaker of eternal life." "We bring this child to thee to be baptized. Take him as thine own, and bestow upon him all the blessings that flow from the 'washing of regeneration.' Bring him to a saving knowledge of thy truth, that his soul may be truly converted to thee. Sanctify him by thy Spirit, that he may be delivered forever from the power of sin and Satan, and that by receiving the spirit of adoption, he may inherit eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

But the doctrine of baptismal grace was neither originated, nor first discovered, by Luther and the Reformers. It was found in the Scriptures by the primitive Church, and practically illustrated in her organization and development. It was involved in the œcumenical creeds and taught by the fathers. Origen states it as follows: "According to the usage of the Church, Baptism is given even to infants, when, if there were nothing in infants which needed forgiveness and mercy, the grace of Baptism would seem to be superfluous. Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. No one is free from pollution, though he has lived but one day upon earth. And because by Baptism native pollution is taken away, therefore infants are baptized." It was also defended by Augustine, the champion of orthodoxy, and even inconsistently admitted by Pelagius.

Augustine asks: "Why are infants baptized for the remission of sins, if they have no sin?" Pelagius replies: "Who can be so impious as to hinder infants from being baptized, and born again in Christ, and so make them miss of the kingdom of God." Augustine further says: "In baptized infants the Holy Spirit dwelleth, though they know it not. So know they not their own mind—they know not their own reason, which lies dormant, as a feeble glimmer, which is to be aroused with the advance of years."

The doctrine of baptismal grace is not, however, confined to the Lutheran Church, but is also held by other Protestant denominations. The Moravians accepted it, by the adoption of the Augusburg Confession. The Church of England appropriated it, in compiling her Thirty-Nine Articles and her liturgical formulas from Lutheran sources. The Calvinistic Churches have differed from the Lutheran in their statements concerning the grace of Baptism, as well as the extent of its availability, limiting its blessings to elect infants. But so repugnant do their representations appear in the light of the

Scriptures and the universally received faith of the Church prior to the rise of Calvinism, that many of their ablest divines have modified their opinions and embraced in substance, if not in form, the Lutheran doctrine. They have maintained that justification and regeneration are not only signified and sealed, but also *imparted* in Baptism, either to all infants, or at least to the elect. Calvin says to Melancthon: "I grant that the efficacy of the Spirit is present in Baptism, so that we are washed and regenerated. We deny that infants cannot be regenerated by the power of God, which is as easy to him as it is wonderful and mysterious. But as they (the objectors) think it would be such a great absurdity for any knowledge of God to be given to infants, to whom Moses denies the knowledge of good and evil, I would beg them to inform me, what danger can result from our affirming that they already receive some portion of that grace, of which they will ere long enjoy the full abundance." Accordingly the late Dr. Miller, of Princeton, as quoted by Dr. Kurtz, observed: "A gracious God may even then (at the moment when the ordinance is administered) accompany the outward emblem with the blessing which it represents, even the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." The late Dr. A. A. Alexander, Professor in the Presbyterian Seminary at Princeton, expresses his views on the subject of baptismal grace in the following explicit terms, and maintains that his sentiments are in perfect accordance with the doctrines received as orthodox by the Presbyterian Church: "I do maintain that *the germ of spiritual life* may be communicated to the soul of an infant, which, of course, remains inactive as does the principle of sin, until, etc.—this development is altogether by the word, etc. But the doctrine that infants are incapable of being regenerated, until they are capable of attending to the word is in my opinion fraught with consequences, *subversive* of our whole system. For, if infants are incapable of a holy principle, the same must be true of a sinful principle, and then the whole doctrine of birth-sin or *natural depravity* is set aside. It may remove some obscurity from the subject to say, that we are accustomed in treating the subject of regeneration with accuracy, TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN IT AND CONVERSION. *The one is the communication of spiritual life, the other is its exercise.* Suppose a dead seed to be impregnated with a vital principle, and you have my idea of regeneration." *Life of A. A. Alexander*, p. 587.

"And what time in infancy is more likely to be the period of spiritual quickening, than the moment when that sacred rite is performed, which is strikingly emblematic of this change. Whether it be proper to say that Baptism may be the *means* of regeneration, depends upon the sense in which the word *means* is used. If in the sense of presenting motives to the rational mind, as when the word is read or heard, then it is not a *means*, for the child has no knowledge of what is done for it. But if by *means* be meant something that is accompanied by the divine efficiency, changing the moral nature of the infant, then, in this sense, Baptism may be called the *means* of regeneration; when thus accompanied by divine grace." *Religious Experience*, p. 38.

In comparison with the specific and emphatic declarations made by the distinguished Reformed and Lutheran theologians quoted above, in regard to Infant Baptism and its gracious efficacy, how moderate do not the representations of our Lutheran Confessors appear. They affirm, "That through Baptism the grace of God is offered, that children are to be baptized, and being through Baptism offered to God, become acceptable unto him, and are received into his favor." And further, "That children are to be baptized, in order that they may become participants of the gospel, that is of the promises of the Holy Spirit, grace and salvation, which belong not only to adults, but also unto children; for in and with Baptism universal grace and the treasures of the gospel are offered to them."

The doctrine of baptismal grace, thus set forth by the Confessors, is sustained by the Holy Scriptures, as interpreted by the most learned and profound commentators of ancient and modern times; it was confessed by the primitive Church and defended by the Christian fathers; it was corrupted and abused by the Romanists, but it has been accepted by the great majority of the Protestants. It supplies the spiritual wants of the children in the family, and imposes the obligation of Christian nurture upon parents; it builds up the Church, by affording adequate incentives to the religious training of the young; it promotes the stability of the State, and advances the moral progress of the nations. Perverted and misapplied by some, misapprehended and assailed by others, it has, nevertheless, maintained the ascendancy in the Lutheran household of faith. And as it could not be overthrown, neither will it be abandoned, but rather maintained in its scriptural and confessional integrity.



## ITS NECESSITY.

In the Latin text of the Confession, the Confessors declare that "Baptism is necessary to salvation." But as this phraseology was liable to be misunderstood, they omitted the words "to salvation" in the German edition, and simply affirmed that "Baptism is necessary." And to guard still more against the misinterpretation of the language employed, Melancthon added to the Latin form of the declaration concerning the necessity of Baptism to salvation, in subsequent editions, the explanatory phrase, "as a ceremony instituted by Christ."

They predicated its necessity upon the declaration and command of Christ, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 5. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19. And as Christ instituted Baptism as a ceremony through which all his followers should be initiated into his Church, and enjoined its observance upon them, it becomes necessary to be baptized, in order that obedience may be rendered to his command, and all the blessings of the kingdom of God secured.

But Baptism was not regarded by the Confessors as necessary *per se*, but as a means through which God offers his grace; not necessary unconditionally, but conditioned upon the possibility of receiving it; not necessary absolutely, but ordinarily as a moral obligation, imposed by the word and institution of Christ. Accordingly, a distinction must be made between that which is essential and that which is merely necessary. Being "born of the Spirit" is absolutely essential to an entrance into the kingdom of God; being "born of water" relatively necessary. The internal renewing of the Holy Ghost is unconditionally essential to salvation; the outward "washing of regeneration" ordinarily necessary.

In consistency with these discriminating statements, the Lutheran Church has not held that Baptism was absolutely necessary to salvation. Accordingly Luther says, that not the deprivation of Baptism, but the contempt of it, condemns a man—and that although God binds us to the means as the ordinary instruments of his grace, he is not himself limited by them. The dying thief, though unbaptized, ascended to Paradise; while Simon Magus, notwithstanding his Baptism, remained "in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of

iniquity." And in like manner, "as children also belong to the promised redemption effected by Christ," and ought on that account to be baptized, nevertheless, should their Baptism be neglected prior to death, they would not, on that account, be excluded from heaven. In other words, children dying in infancy out of the Church, even those of the heathen, are saved without baptism, through the saving efficacy of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, and the extraordinary operation of the Holy Spirit.

Baumgarten says: "The necessity of Baptism is not an absolute, unconditional necessity, but a moral obligation, which presupposes and requires an outward opportunity."

Cotta, as quoted by Dr. Krauth, maintains the salvation of infants by the following considerations: "1. From the infinite pity of God. 2. The extent of the benefits wrought by Christ. 3. The analogy of faith—no one absolutely reprobated, but actual unbelief alone condemns. 4. Not the absence but the contempt of Baptism condemns. 5. God can operate in an extraordinary way. 6. Though original sin, *in itself*, merits damnation, and is a *sufficient* cause of it, yet it is not, (because of God's infinite goodness,) an *adequate* cause of the actual infliction of the condemnation."

Luther, while he held that Baptism was necessary to salvation in general, says in reference to the children of Christians who have died unbaptized: "The holy and merciful God will think kindly upon them. What he will do with them, he has revealed to no one, that Baptism may not be despised, but has reserved to his own mercy: God does wrong to no one." And as regards children in general, he says: "God has not bound himself to the sacraments, so as not to do otherwise, without the sacraments. So I hope that the good and gracious God has something good in view for those who, not by any guilt of their own, are unbaptized."

#### ITS ADAPTATION.

Wisdom is exhibited in the adaptation of means to the attainment of ends. The provisions of redemption show the manifold wisdom of God. Baptism as a divine ordinance must, therefore, be characterized by adaptation.

1. *Baptism is Adapted to the Presentation of Children to God.* Children are said to be a heritage from the Lord, who is the framer of their bodies and the Father of their spirits. Hence he says:

"All souls are mine;" Ezek. xviii. 4. The gift of a child is there fore the greatest earthly blessing which God can confer upon parents, and it is befitting that they should recognize his claims, and dedicate it to his service. Accordingly, God required parents to offer every male child to him through circumcision, and to present to him besides all the first born, the males being thus specially set apart for the priesthood. They were regarded as holy unto the Lord, and their parents brought them to the temple and presented them to God, accompanied with an appropriate offering, Ex. xiii. 2, Numb. viii. 17. In accordance with these directions, Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth, and presented unto the Lord in the temple at the end of forty days by Joseph and Mary.

The relation which God bears to children as their Creator and his claims to them, their moral wants and the blessings necessary to supply them and secure their spiritual interests, are not limited to periods, but remain the same in all generations. The reasons which induced God to require parents to present their children to him during the Jewish, would lead him to make the same requisition upon them in the Christian dispensation. And as the distinctions between Jew and Gentile, male and female, the first-born child and the other children, were all to be removed, it was necessary that circumcision, which was more particularly adapted to such limitations, should be superseded. And as by faith the Gentiles became the seed of Abraham, and male and female became one in Christ, and every believer became sanctified unto God, and every child of a believing parent became "holy" unto the Lord, it became necessary that a rite should be substituted for circumcision, adapted to the universality which was to characterize the Christian dispensation; and Baptism was chosen to meet all these requisitions.

It would, therefore, be expected that provision should be made for the presentation of children to God in the Christian Church. This, it seems to us, is clearly taught by Paul (1 Cor. vii. 14): "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband. Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." According to the ceremonial law certain things were regarded as clean (holy), and others as unclean. The unclean could not be offered to God, and that which was holy would alone be accepted by him. Now, Paul declares that accord-

ing to divine arrangement, the faith of the believing husband or wife so sanctifies the unbelieving one that the children born to them become holy, and can properly be offered unto the Lord. This idea, with which the Jews were so familiar, and under the promptings of which they had been accustomed to present their children to God for ages, doubtless actuated the parents who brought their infants to Christ, induced him to accept them, and led him to institute Baptism as a rite, in all respects adapted to the presentation of children to God, and their consecration to his service. Accordingly, the Confessors taught in the Article under consideration, that "children, through Baptism, are presented or offered to God," received into his favor, and recognized as his sons and daughters.

2. *Baptism is Adapted to the Religious Training of Children.* A child is born into the world in a state of ignorance, depravity and helplessness. It is endowed with intellectual and moral faculties, upon the proper development of which will depend its course of conduct and character in this life, as well as its destiny in that which is to come. Accordingly God has made ample provision in the establishment of His Church for the religious training of the young.

The process through which the results of religious training may be secured in the Church, is represented in the Scriptures as analogous to that through which the results of culture are attained in nature. A plant, remaining in its original position and subjected to the forces of nature surrounding it, will grow to maturity naturally. But if it be transplanted, and subjected to a change of climate, soil, light, heat and moisture, it may be greatly modified in size, form, texture, and even in its nature. Every child naturally engendered "is conceived and born in sin," and if left to develop, "its evil desires and propensities" under the influence of the errors and example of the world, it will grow up in wickedness, and remain a child of wrath, exposed to condemnation. But through Infant Baptism, a child may be taken up from the world, initiated into the Church, subjected to Christian nurture, and transformed by baptismal grace into a child of God and an heir of eternal life. Furthermore, by strewing the pollen of one species of plant upon the pistils of another, a still greater modification may be effected and a new variety of plant produced, whose life-force will differ from and yet resemble that of each of the parent plants. And in like manner may the animal and rational life of a child be so modified under the

forces of baptismal grace and Christian nurture, as to become a spiritual life differing from each and yet resembling both. It still retains its animal life with its appetitive propensities, as well as its rational life with its intellectual and moral faculties; but the spiritual life, superinduced upon them by the Holy Spirit, becomes regnant over both, and through conscience, its motive power, regulates the appetitive cravings of the animal, as well as the moral dictates of the rational nature, and thus secures the end of religious training, "walking in newness of life." In this, according to Luther "consists the efficacy and work of Baptism, which are nothing else but the mortification of the old Adam, and afterwards the rearing up of the new man, both of which are to be pursued through our whole life, so that a Christian life is nothing more than a daily Baptism, once begun and ever to be continued."

In the light of Christian nurture, Infant Baptism attains its special significance and value. No degree of natural culture through purely rational means, can ever attain a transformation of nature and produce spiritual results. Religious training, without Infant Baptism as a means of grace, becomes a human experiment, without any divine arrangement or special provision. The expectation may, indeed, be cherished, that the desired result will be attained, but it cannot carry with it the assurance given by God to parents who dedicate their children to him in Baptism, and bring them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and to whom he thus seals the promise of the covenant of grace, that he will be a God unto them, and their seed after them in all generations.

#### ITS COMPLEMENT.

The Christian Church, being a development of the Jewish, retains many of its distinguishing characteristics, as well as religious customs. Every Jewish male child was presented to the Lord, entered into covenant with him, the promise of which was sealed to it by circumcision. The child thus became a member of the Church of God. But as church membership required a profession of faith and obedience, and as the child was, by reason of its undeveloped capacities, incapable of making the requisite vow itself, the parent was required to make it in its name. That vow, according to the divine constitution of the family, was as obligatory upon the child as if it had been made by itself, and it was thereby pledged to assume and



fulfil it as soon as it arrived at the age of discretion. It was enjoined upon parents to explain to their children the import of religious ordinances, to remind them of the nature and requirements of the vow made for them at their circumcision, and to urge them to ratify the same in their own name. It was expected, that under the moulding power of religious training, carried on in the family and seconded by the instructions of the Church, every child would be fully prepared to make a personal profession of religion at the age of thirteen, when the circumcised children were called upon to confirm their vows, and were declared, by the laying on of hands, to be the sons of the congregation of Israel.

Infant membership, with all its Jewish concomitants, save that Baptism has taken the place of circumcision, is retained in the Christian Church. The ancient covenant still stands—children are still commanded to enter into it—they are still unable to act for themselves—their parents are still bound to consecrate them to God, and make the required vows in their name, as well as to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” The Church is still obligated to recognize their membership and provide them with a religious training—the children are still bound at the age of discretion to ratify the vows made in their name at their Baptism—and “the laying on of hands” is still retained as the most significant, appropriate and impressive mode of making a profession of religion, and they are thereby recognized as full members of the Christian Church and entitled to all its privileges.

This form of profession was called Confirmation. It originated among the Jews; it was adopted by the Church in the second century, and retained by the Confessors of the Lutheran Church “as a rite transmitted to us from the Fathers.” Confirmation is, consequently, the complement of Infant Baptism. Infant Baptism is the antecedent, Confirmation its consequent. In Infant Baptism, the child was dedicated to God by its parents; in Confirmation, it dedicates itself to Him. In Infant Baptism, the child entered into covenant with God by substitution; in Confirmation, it ratifies that covenant in person. Through Infant Baptism, the child was placed in the school of Christ; in Confirmation, it is recognized as a trained disciple of Christ. In Infant Baptism, the grace of God was offered and conferred; in Confirmation, its transforming power is exemplified. In Infant Baptism, the child was apprenticed and subjected to a

course of preparation ; in Confirmation, it enters upon the practice of the good profession of Christianity. By Infant Baptism, the child is admitted into the family of God, but although he be an heir, he is kept, during his minority, "under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the Father;" in Confirmation he is recognized as "lord of all," and put in possession of his promised inheritance, embracing all spiritual blessings on earth, and eventually the enjoyment of immortal glory in heaven.

#### ITS REJECTORS.

These are described by the Confessors as follows:

"The Anabaptists, who teach that Infant Baptism is improper, and that children are saved without Baptism, are condemned."

Their erroneous sentiments are more fully set forth in the Form of Concord. They maintained the following propositions:

"1. That infants, which are not baptized, are not sinners in the sight of God, but are righteous and innocent ; and that, consequently, in their innocence they are saved without Baptism, of which they have no need. Thus they deny and reject the whole doctrine concerning original sin, and all that is connected with it."

"2. That infants are not to be baptized, until they attain the use of their reason, and are able to make a confession of faith themselves."

"3. That the children of Christians, since they are born of Christian and believing parents, are holy and the children of God, even without and prior to Baptism. For this reason they do not highly esteem Infant Baptism, nor promote it; contrary to the express words of the promise of God, which extends to those alone who keep his covenant and do not despise it. Gen. xvii. 9, 10."

The errors of the Anabaptists, condemned by the Confessors, embrace the denial of *Pedo*, as distinguished from Adult Baptism, the rejection of the doctrine of Original Sin, and the maintenance of the salvation of infants on the ground of their natural innocence and holiness. Inasmuch, however, as these errors are refuted in the general discussion of the subject, no direct refutation is deemed necessary here, and we, therefore, content ourselves with the simple statement of them as found above. The principal objections made by the Anabaptists to Infant Baptism, are the following:

1. That there is no scriptural warrant for Infant Baptism. For

an answer to this we refer to the argument already presented, under the head of the subjects of Baptism.

2. That faith is a universal prerequisite to the reception of Baptism, and that as children cannot believe, they are not proper subjects of Baptism. To the assertion that faith is universally demanded as a prerequisite for Baptism, we reply that it is contradicted by an examination of all the passages contained in the Scriptures referring to the subject. Nothing is said about faith as the indispensable condition of Baptism, even in the words of the institution, as contained in Matthew, and the same is true of the great majority of the scriptural references to Baptism. There are, however, a number of passages in which faith and repentance are made conditional for Baptism. The true interpretation of the baptismal passages must, therefore, be sought in the practice of the inspired writers. An examination of all the examples of Baptism administered by the Apostles proves that they invariably insisted upon the exercise of repentance and faith for the reception of Baptism on the part of adults, and just as invariably administered Baptism to the children composing their households, without requiring the exercise of faith from them.

To the assertion that children cannot believe or have faith, we reply that the Confessors did not hold that unconscious infants had truth apprehending and appropriative faith. When they describe the characteristics of justifying, regenerating, sanctifying and saving faith, they have reference to adults and not to infants. The faith of infants is not affirmed in the Confession, the subject is only incidentally alluded to in the Larger Catechism, and the individual sentiments of Luther are not quoted in any of the Symbolical Books. And even he only maintained that children had faith in a technical sense, and held it more as a matter of theological hypothesis, than as a positive dogma. He, accordingly, wisely abstained from introducing it either into the definition of Baptism contained in the Smalcald Articles, or the Small Catechism, and in the Larger one delivered the whole question about the faith of children to the Doctors as one of secondary importance. From all of which it becomes manifest, that the theory of the Anabaptists, that evangelical faith is an indispensable prerequisite for the reception of Baptism, does not interpret all the passages of Scripture pertaining to the subject; that the individual hypothesis of Luther, that children

have faith, and, consequently, meet the universal requirement demanded of adults, interprets the baptismal passages no better; but the theory of the Confessors, that Baptism is to be administered to adults as well as to their children on the ground of the faith of the parents alone, and not on that of their infant offspring, does interpret every inspired declaration concerning Baptism, and therefore proves itself to be the theory of Christ, illustrated by his Apostles.

3. That the benefits of the sacraments can only be secured through faith, and as children can have no faith, Baptism can confer on them no benefits. We have already seen, that in the earlier statements of Luther, the theory was stoutly maintained that faith was indispensable to the reception of the benefits of the sacrament, and that children had faith, and in consequence thereof became participants of its blessings. We have, however, also seen that he subsequently modified his theory in these respects, and expressed himself in a different manner. He accordingly says in his letter on Anabaptism, as already quoted: "Faith indeed is not for the promotion of Baptism, *but Baptism for the promotion of faith.*" In accordance with this sentiment the Confessors declare that children are baptized in order that they may become participants of the promises of grace and the Holy Spirit, who, in his own time and place, works faith in them, through which all the treasures of the gospel, offered in Baptism, become their inheritance.

4. That the predication of any blessing as the result of Infant Baptism, led unavoidably to a magical *opus operatum*. In regard to the divine operations in general, the Confessors rejected the fanatical notions of the enthusiasts, that God works in the minds and hearts of men "by a secret inspiration or a peculiar divine revelation." Relative to the efficacy of the sacraments, we have seen that they rejected the error of the Dominicans, "that God has placed a spiritual power in the water," as well as that of the Franciscans, "that Baptism washes away sins through the will of God." The *opus operatum* of the Romanists, with its magical operation, they condemn as follows: "Our opponents have no certainty, nor can they correctly tell us, or state in clear and intelligible terms, how the Holy Ghost is given. They dream that by the simple bodily reception and use of the sacraments, *ex opere operato*, we obtain grace and receive the Holy Ghost, although the heart be entirely absent, as if the light of the Holy Ghost were so worthless, weak

and futile." The Confessors held that there was but *one* Baptism, which was the means of imparting the Holy Spirit to adult believers, and as that same Baptism was to be administered to their children, and as their children needed the influence of the Holy Ghost just as much as their parents, it must, unless it should become a different species of Baptism, be the means of conferring on them the Holy Spirit also. The manner in which this takes place is through the administration of the ordinance according to the Scriptures, on the ground of the faith of the parents, and in answer to the prayers of the administrator, as the representative of the Church and the minister of God.

5. That to enter into covenant presupposes voluntary and intelligent action, and as children are incapable of apprehending and assenting to the terms of a covenant, no moral obligation can be imposed, and no special blessings can be conferred upon them through Baptism. In reply to this it must suffice to say, that God did, nevertheless, call upon children to enter into covenant with him; that he sealed unto them, through circumcision, great and invaluable blessings; that he threatened to cut off every child that did not in like manner enter into covenant with him; that on great public occasions, the children of the Israelites were present, and received special mention as entering into covenant with God as well as the adults, and thus became heirs with their fathers of all the blessings of the covenant of promise. And as children were embraced in the covenants made by the parents, so too were they obliged to fulfil the stipulations thereof, according to the divine arrangement, just as much as if they had intelligently and voluntarily entered into the covenant themselves. And the same is true in regard to human covenants. We, as children, are bound by the covenants made by our fathers, and our children are bound by the compacts which we may make and ratify. And as we inherited the blessings of the covenants of our fathers, so will our posterity become the heirs of the inheritance of their fathers, as well as ours, to the remotest generations.

#### CONCLUSION.

From the foregoing discussion of the subject of Baptism, the character of the Confessors as reformers, and the manner in which they accomplished the work of the great Reformation, become man-



ifest. And while they thus transmit to us the treasures of wisdom gathered by them from the fields of experience, observation and the Scriptures, they not only challenge our admiration, but they become to us, their ecclesiastical descendants, worthy examples for our imitation.

In their presentation of the subject of Infant Baptism, the Confessors exhibit both unity and diversity of sentiment. They agreed in confessing that Infant Baptism has the divine sanction; that through it grace is offered to children; that the grace thus offered embraces remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and that children being thus offered to God, become acceptable to him, and are received into his favor. They differed in regard to the question whether children had faith, and in what sense this could be consistently affirmed, the precise effects produced by the operation of the Spirit on their minds and hearts, as well as in regard to the precise period, manner and degree of his influence upon them. In so far as they allowed themselves to refer to this aspect of the subject at all, they did so with great circumspection, and expressed their various shades of thought in different terms.

On Baptism, as was their wont on almost all disputed subjects, the Confessors took a medium position. The extremes, which in the providence of God had arisen in the Church, were those championed by Rome and Munster. Between the magical *opus operatum* of the Romanists, and the spiritualistic fanaticism of the Anabaptists, they were called upon to choose. Under the guidance of the Spirit, they took their position midway between these extremes, and expressed their judgment in the Augsburg Confession. And so clear and scriptural did their doctrine appear, that it met not only with the approval of the Lutherans, but also with that of the Reformed. At Marburg, Zwingli and his associates formally endorsed it, and the representatives of the Reformed did the same at the Wittenberg Conference. The Lutheran doctrine of Baptism, unitedly confessed in the Wittenberg Concordia, as given by Dorner, was as follows: "The promise was valid also for infants, and was to be appropriated to them through the ministrations of the Church. Without regeneration there was, even for infants, no entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Infants indeed had no understanding, but the Holy Ghost exercised his power in them according to their measure, and thereby they pleased God. The way and manner of these operations were

unknown, but it was certain that there were in them new and holy impulses, the inclination to believe in Christ and to love God, which was in a certain measure similar to the movements of those which are otherwise possessed of faith and love."

The Confessors in setting forth the doctrine of Baptism, expressed their opinions with marked wisdom and great moderation. The proof of this will at once become apparent, by comparing the declarations, both as individuals and Confessors, with those of the theologians and Confessors of other denominations. The Westminster Confession says: "The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered, yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will in his appointed time." The Heidelberg Catechism declares "That Christ appointed this external washing with water, adding thereto this promise, that I am as certainly washed by his blood and Spirit from all the pollution of my soul, that is from all my sins, as I am washed externally with water;" that to be thus baptized, "is to receive the remission of sins, and also to be renewed by the Holy Ghost;" and that, "as infants, as well as the adult, are included in the covenant and Church of God, and since redemption from sin by the blood of Christ and the Holy Ghost, the author of faith, is promised to them no less than to the adult, they must therefore, by Baptism, as a sign of the covenant, be also admitted into the Christian Church," etc. Wesley, as quoted by Curteis, says: "It is certain, that our Church (the Episcopal) supposes that all who are baptized in their infancy are at the same time 'born again,' and it is allowed, that the whole office for the baptism of infants, proceeds upon this supposition." Dr. Heppe, a distinguished modern Reformed theologian, in presenting quotations from Calvinistic authors, quotes Polanus as testifying, "That to those who are baptized, it is signified and sealed, that they (to whom the covenant of grace pertaineth) are received into the communion of the covenant of grace, are inserted into Christ, and his mystic body the Church, are justified by God, for the sake of Christ's blood shed for us, and regenerated by Christ's Spirit." In order to estimate the force of these Calvinistic quotations, it must be remembered that the grace of Baptism is held to pertain to the

children of the elect, as well as to the parents themselves. In comparison with the above confessional deliverances, those of the Lutheran Confessors must be regarded as mild; and in comparison with the declarations of Heppe, and those heretofore quoted of Calvin, and Drs. Miller and Alexander, those of Luther and Melancthon, as already presented, appear very moderate.

The Confessors also discriminate in their confessional writings with special care between Adult and Infant Baptism, and in this respect imitate the sacred writers. Christ and his Apostles exhibit the doctrine of Baptism in general, the qualifications for its reception, its relation to the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, regeneration and sanctification, union with Christ, church membership and salvation, in clear and positive terms. These representations are of such a character as to convince the great majority of Christians that Infant Baptism is taught and involved in them. And as there is but one Baptism instituted by Christ, and as that was administered to adult believers and their children, it follows that whatever grace it is the specific office of Baptism to confer, of which children stand in need and are capable of receiving, it must offer and confer upon them. Nevertheless, the inspired writers abstain from declaring in express terms, what the specific benefits of Infant Baptism are, and leave them to be inferred from their general teaching on the subject. And this is precisely the course pursued by the Confessors. They take up the adult believer and assure him that by Baptism he is "born of water and of the Spirit," and that it is to him "the washing of regeneration," through which he may be "sanctified" and "saved." But when they come to treat of Infant Baptism in particular, they go no farther than to declare that grace is offered through Baptism; that children are thereby presented to God, who, through such Baptism, become acceptable to him, and are received into his favor. And in explanation of this they content themselves with the assurance, that the promises of grace and of the Holy Spirit belong to children as well as to adults, and that they are baptized in order that they may become partakers thereof.

In the domain of philosophy it has often occurred that the disciples of the great masters have misapprehended their tenets, and perverted their principles, and thus become the propagandists of errors, which were baneful in their tendencies, and brought reproach

upon their names and systems. And the same thing has occurred in the domain of symbolism in the Lutheran Church. The wisdom and moderation of the Confessors in setting forth the doctrine of baptismal grace, have not always been imitated by those professing the Lutheran name. Their conceptions, forms of expression and manner of applying it, were discarded, and the doctrine so perverted as to be little, if any, better than the magical *opus operatum* of the Romanists. Such a perversion took place in the Pietistic era of the Church. "The so-called orthodox opponents of Spener," says Dorner, "were of opinion that there is a truly spiritual and divine theology even of the unregenerate;" that "piety is no essential requirement in a theologian, for the apodictic mark of a true teacher is simply correctness of doctrine;" and that "saving power was transferred to knowledge and inward experience of salvation only inferred from purity of doctrine." "The office of an orthodox teacher, even if he be ungodly, is self-efficacious. With this were connected hierarchial notions of the office of the Church and of so-called official grace. \* \* Thus the continued agency of the Holy Ghost was, in a deistic fashion, abolished by the ministry, by the Church and its means of grace, and the power belonging to the Spirit alone, represented as abdicated to these second causes. These were no longer regarded as mere *media* for his operation, but as exercising an independent agency, wherever access was allowed to them. A regenerating power being thus attributed, not only to the sacraments, but to correct doctrine and to notions, in the case of those who did not wickedly oppose them, the *opus operatum* of Romish doctrine, which works in all who *non ponunt obicem* was again reached, and an intellectual Pelagianism combined with a magical effect of grace."

Dr. S. Sprecher, in his Holman Lecture on Original Sin (*Evangelical Review*, October, 1867), presents the doctrine of the Confessors as follows: "The Confessors declare that all men naturally engendered, whether infants or adults, are born in sin, and that this inherent disease and natural depravity *is sin*, and still condemns and causes eternal death to all who are not born again by Baptism and the Holy Ghost. \* \* I need not say, therefore, that the Confessors do not mean that God has no other way or means of regeneration except those revealed in the Bible, or that unbaptized infants, from the mere absence or want of baptism, are unregenerated, and



dying in infancy are unprepared for heaven. They speak only of the revealed order of salvation, the way into which the gospel calls us, and in which those who hear the gospel have the only sure warrant and certain pledge of regeneration. To subjects who have not the gospel, or are incapable of receiving it, this declaration does not refer. For aught it teaches, all infants, baptized and unbaptized, may be regenerated and saved. But if regenerated and saved, they are regenerated and saved by the grace of God alone."

In regard to the perversion of the doctrine by scholastic distinctions, Dr. Sprecher says: "Spener deplored the effects of it as little better than those of the Papal *opus operatum*, and it was a departure from original and true Lutheranism. \* \* While Spener regarded the conversion of Christians who had fallen into spiritual death, as a return to baptismal grace, yet he calls such conversion explicitly and emphatically a new regeneration, inasmuch as the baptismal regeneration (grace) had been entirely lost; and regarding this as the case of the vast majority of those baptized in infancy, he treated all who did not exhibit the evidences of spiritual life, as not only unconverted, but unregenerate. \* \* As Luther returned to primitive Christianity, so did Spener return to early Lutheranism."

The terms employed by the Confessors, and the precise meaning attached to them in portraying the doctrine of baptismal grace, deserve special consideration. The words "faith" and "regeneration," as the synonym of "being born again," and "born of God," are frequently used by the sacred writers, and have a clear and well defined meaning. The Holy Ghost works faith through the word and sacraments, and whosoever believes on the Son of God and is baptized is begotten of the word of truth, "born of water and of the Spirit," and receives "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." In this sense the Confessors employ these terms in their application to adults; but when they refer to Infant Baptism and its effects, both in the Confession and the Apology, they employ none of them, and express themselves in the general terms already quoted. And even when they employ the words "faith" and "regeneration" as applicable to baptized infants, it is done in a technical sense, which, in order to prevent misapprehension, they explain. But as these terms have their fixed meaning, and will be understood accordingly, it is injudicious to use them in connection with Infant Baptism, without careful discrimination; and



as the impression made by their ordinary meaning may be stronger than that made by the explanation of their technical meaning, it would, perhaps, be better to imitate the Confessors in this respect, and not employ them at all in defining Infant Baptism. We have already seen that Luther affirmed that children had "faith," and how he explained his meaning in the Wittenberg Concordia. He also employed the term "regenerate" and its synonyms in his Baptismal Formulas just as it had been used in the Romish service; but while he did this in deference to the prejudices of the people who had been accustomed to it, he employed it in the Evangelical, and not in the Romish sense. He tells us this himself. "I did not wish to alter many things, though I could have wished that the Form was better furnished. For it had careless authors, who did not sufficiently consider the importance of Baptism. But I leave the most part unchanged, lest weak consciences complain that I have instituted a new Baptism, and lest those already baptized complain that they are not rightly baptized. For, as has been observed, human additions are not of much consequence, so that Baptism is itself administered with the word of God, *true faith, and earnest calling upon God.*"

The phrase "Baptismal Regeneration," was not employed by the Confessors, and it does not occur in the Symbolical Books. It is true that as the "*washing* of regeneration," in Titus iii. 5, refers to Baptism, the phrase "*baptismal* regeneration" would be its scriptural equivalent. But as it is not specifically applied by Paul to baptized infants, and as it is generally used to express the Romish doctrine of the *opus operatum*, it cannot be employed in setting forth the Lutheran doctrine of baptismal grace without constant liability to misstatement and misapprehension.

Dr. A. Alexander (Religious Experience, p. 37, 38,) says: "If piety may commence at any age, how solicitous should parents be for their children, that God would bestow his grace upon them, even before they know their right hand from their left. And when about to dedicate them to God in Holy Baptism, how earnestly should they pray, that they may be baptized with the Holy Ghost; that while their bodies are washed in the emblematic laver of regeneration, their souls may experience the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. If the sentiments expressed above be correct, then may there be such a thing as *bap-*

*tismal regeneration*: not that the mere external application of water can have any effect to purify the soul, nor that internal grace uniformly or generally accompanies this external washing, but that God, who works when and by what means he pleases, may regenerate by his Spirit the soul of the infant, while in his sacred name water is applied to the body."

In his Life by his son, Dr. Alexander refers to the misapprehension of his meaning which had occurred, as follows: "If, however, I had foreseen the perversion which some have made of my real opinion, I would perhaps have avoided the use of the phrase 'baptismal regeneration,' but I have clearly explained that my meaning was, that as infants are capable of regeneration before the use of reason, that blessing might be granted at the moment when they were made the subjects of an ordinance which is intended to give an emblematical representation of that change."

The doctrine of "baptismal regeneration" has been defined by Dr. S. S. Schmucker, as follows: "By this designation is meant the doctrine that Baptism is necessarily and invariably attended by spiritual regeneration, and that such water Baptism is unconditionally essential to salvation." "Regeneration consists in a radical change in our religious views of the divine character, laws, etc., a change in our religious feelings, and in our religious purposes and habits of action, of none of which children are capable in the proper sense of the term regeneration." Dr. C. P. Krauth (Conservative Reformation, p. 565), in referring to the above statements, says: "The charge against our Church as teaching 'baptismal regeneration,' as those who make the charge define it, is, as we have seen, utterly ungrounded. It is not true in its general statement nor in its details; it is utterly without warrant in the whole or in a singular particular." And this denial is reiterated by Dr. C. F. Schaeffer and Prof. D. Worley, in their discussion of the subject contained in the *Evangelical Quarterly Review*. Stier maintains that the words spoken in Titus iii. 5, 6, "cannot hold good of every Baptism of every child, and that while *full* regeneration cannot be predicated of Infant Baptism, a living principle, and a commencement tending to that full regeneration, it does involve in spite of all contradiction and confusion of opinion." And he agrees with Hoffman, "that only in Infant Baptism, the nature of Baptism is exhibited in its purity and integrity, as it is the first receiving of the gift of grace

unto a new life, while an adult must necessarily bring to it something of the old, inrooted, personal character which affects, although it may be in a very small degree, the reception of the grace." And this opinion receives additional force from the fact, that the Apostles and their adult converts, as believers, were regenerated by the Spirit through the word as a spiritual seed and not through Baptism, and hence they and all others like them, as Gerhard says, "have no need of regeneration through Baptism, but to them Baptism is a confirmation and sealing of regeneration," and the passages referring to Baptism and the new birth are accordingly clothed with special signification when applied to Infant Baptism.

The doctrine of baptismal grace held by the Confessors, involving as it does the moral development and destiny of every baptized child, is not divested of all difficulties. But to those who admit the conclusiveness of the argument for Infant Baptism, and the specific office of Baptism, as the divinely appointed means of sealing the remission of sins and of conferring the gift of the Holy Ghost, as expressly taught by Christ, Peter, Paul and Luke, and illustrated by Apostolic practice, these difficulties will by no means appear insuperable. If Baptism be a *means of grace*, and there be but *one* Baptism, it must, when administered to children, be the medium of offering and conferring grace upon them. And if Baptism was designed to give assurance of justification and impart the Spirit of regeneration, it must, unless it cease to be Baptism, perform its scriptural office when administered to children. In other words, Infant Baptism *must be* Baptism, and *not* some other ordinance. As those who hold the doctrine of human depravity, readily believe that God through Infant Baptism cancels the penal consequences of original sin, the remaining difficulty will be, to believe that God has made special provision for bestowing upon children the Holy Spirit, to aid them in resisting the sin-enticing power of their depraved natures. And can this prove a stumbling block to faith? We trow not.

Dr. Alexander says: "It is an interesting question, whether now there are any persons sanctified from the womb? If the communication of grace ever took place at so early a period, there is no reason why it should not now sometimes occur. \* \* As we believe that infants may be the subjects of regeneration, and cannot be saved without it, why may it not be the fact that some who are regenerated live to mature age?" If these questions be prompted

from the Calvinistic standpoint of the particularity of grace, they are easily answered from the Lutheran standpoint of the universality of grace. No good reason can be given, why grace cannot be imparted in *some* cases at so early a period, but many reasons can be given why such grace may be imparted in all cases meeting the scriptural requirements through holy Baptism.

To the prophet Jeremiah it was said: "Before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee." David declares that "the Lord was his God from his mother's womb," and that he made him to "hope from his mother's breasts." The angel Gabriel declared, that John the Baptist should "be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb." These passages prove that children may become the subjects of divine grace and receive the Holy Spirit from birth; that he must have some way of influencing them; that by such influence they are "sanctified" and become the children of God, and that adequate reasons existed for such special manifestations of grace to children in both dispensations. These declarations ought to remove the difficulty of those who think that infants are incapable of being brought under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and who, through their chronological and metaphysical speculations, propose to render God the important service of instructing him in regard to the capacities of children, and the operations of the Spirit, and of guarding him against a work of supererogation in dispensing his grace to them through Baptism prematurely. If Enoch and Elijah were bodily translated to heaven, and Lazarus and Christ raised from the dead, to illustrate the universality of the doctrine of immortality and the resurrection, why may not the sanctification of Jeremiah and John from the womb illustrate the universality of the doctrine of baptismal grace conferred upon children by the Holy Spirit through Infant Baptism?

The early piety of children has also an important bearing on this subject. Samuel feared the Lord from his earliest years. Timothy knew the Scriptures and was made wise unto salvation from childhood. Dr. Bushnell refers to the case of Baxter, who became pious so young, that he could not remember any period when he did not love and trust in Jesus, and Dr. Alexander states that such cases have often occurred. President Edwards mentions the case of Phoebe Bartlett, and other manifestations of the Spirit's work in the conversion of very young children in his day; and the examples of



early piety in the family and the Sunday-schools in our day, may be counted by thousands. Now Luther in the Larger Catechism, and Melancthon in the Apology, state that God gave the Holy Ghost to many who were baptized in their infancy, and regard it not only as an argument in favor of Infant Baptism, but also of the truth of the doctrine of baptismal grace.

Every child has an animal and a rational nature, whose respective developments commence from birth. The motive power of the animal nature is exerted through appetite, that of the rational nature through conscience. Now, as the world and Satan may influence the animal nature to do evil, the Holy Ghost is provided to influence the rational nature to do good. Adequate provision is thus made to counteract the development of depravity, and to secure the development of piety. But if baptismal grace be denied to children, then will the flesh, the world and the devil have free course, and childhood be left helpless and exposed to their corrupting influences, without any supernatural assistance during the formative period of life, in determining its course and in forming its character. And if this be true, then must the declaration, that "where sin abounded" through Adam, "grace did much more abound" through Christ, be regarded rather as a rhetorical flourish than as a veritable fact, and such deficiency stand out as a glaring and unaccountable inconsistency in the economy of grace and redemption. Every child has constitutionally a disposition to love and trust its parents. This disposition manifests itself very early, and becomes the ground of piety, that is of obedience towards its parents, prompted by faith and love. Now, as it is the work of the Holy Spirit to shed abroad the love of God in the heart, why may he not, by a superinduction of divine grace, so dispose the heart of a child, that its constitutional capacity for piety towards its parents may become also a gracious capacity for piety towards God? And as it is the work of the Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and show them to the soul, the child, as it is made acquainted with Christ, will be able spiritually to discern him, and its gracious capacity to love, trust, and obey him will become manifest, and constitute Christian piety. And in this manner, the Spirit will work faith, as well as to will and to do, in the mind and heart of a child, in his own time and in his own way. And that such manifestations of baptismal grace are not only possible but actual, the history of Christian nurture in the churches holding it abundantly proves.



The apprehension that the doctrine of baptismal grace would prove practically detrimental to experimental piety, is based upon misapprehension. The doctrines concerning faith, repentance, conversion, regeneration and sanctification, when apprehended and received, become the source of religious experience and practical piety. But no uninspired men ever lived who understood and preached these doctrines more clearly and effectively than Luther and the Reformers, Spener and the Pietists, Muhlenberg and the fathers of the American Lutheran Church. The modern spiritualistic reformers, who charge them with promoting formalism and self-righteousness, and who claim a monopoly of experimental piety, would do well to sit at their feet as learners, and from their writings and example correct their fanatical notions of religious experience, as well as mend their inconsistent lives. The Confessors held the doctrine of baptismal grace, and through the consistent use of it, became the authors of the Reformation; the Pietists, the promoters of the revival of true Lutheranism; and the Halleian Fathers, the founders of the Lutheran Church in America.

The tendency to naturalism and legalism is inherent in human nature, and not a necessary outgrowth of the doctrine of baptismal grace. It threatened, at times, almost a total apostasy during the Mosaic economy, led the Jews to crucify Christ, deluded even some of the converts of the apostles, leavened the Romish Church, and inoculated the Lutheran in the seventeenth, the Episcopal in the eighteenth, and the Congregational in the nineteenth century; and the instruments chosen of God to reform them, through a revival of experimental piety, were, in almost all cases except that of Edwards, believers in baptismal grace.

Two general systems of religious effort for the promotion of experimental piety have been prevalent in the Christian Church. The one may be called the system of religious training, involving baptismal grace, infant membership, and Christian nurture in the family, the school and the Church. While its advocates make a faithful use of the ordinary means of grace, they regard it as not only allowable, but also in accordance with scriptural precedent, to make special efforts to lead the impenitent to Christ, and edify believers, at such times as the religious interests of the Church and the indications of Providence call for them. The other system may be called that of extraordinary periodical efforts. Its advocates reject baptismal

grace, lay comparatively little stress on Christian nurture, undervalue the ordinary means of grace, and rely mainly on special periodical efforts for the conversion of children and adults. But the large proportion of self-deceptions and spurious experiences, together with the multitude of backsliders and the instability of the piety promoted thereby, have induced many of its abettors to modify it, by introducing some of the features of the training system of God, and thus guard against its injurious results. Tested by its fruits, the Lutheran doctrine of baptismal grace, when faithfully preached and consistently developed, will bear favorable comparison with the modern system of periodical efforts, or with any other system of doctrine and usage ever employed for the promotion of experimental religion and the development of true piety.

If the arguments by which the Confessors endeavored to prove the doctrine of baptismal grace be deemed inconclusive, those who reject it will be constrained either to originate a new or to adopt an old theory. As they will hardly venture to engage in invention, they must content themselves with making a selection. They are not likely to make choice of the one-sided spiritualistic theory of the Quakers, who dispense with Baptism altogether; nor that of the Anabaptists, who reject Infant Baptism; nor that of the Romanists, who invest it with a magical influence; nor that of the Campbellites, who attribute its justifying and regenerating power to its mode (immersion); nor that of the Calvinists, who maintain that Baptism is applied to the children of believing parents, as the sign of a regeneration already accomplished, according to the purpose and election of God. This leaves them nothing but the Puritan theory as the object of their choice.

The modern Puritan theory was recently set forth in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* in these words: "In the economy of grace, prayer for the salvation of men puts them in the way of receiving more abundant ministrations of the Spirit. Infant Baptism is, on the part of parents and the Church, a confession, a prayer, a pledge and a hope, embodied in one sacrament. It is a confession of the universal reign of sin, except where grace abounds; a prayer for the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit; a pledge of faithfulness of Christian nurture; and a monument of the hope that the prayer will be answered, and that through the divine blessing, the nurture will accomplish its designed results. As being the most objective and

public expression of this faith that can be made on the part of the parent and the Church, God on his part binds himself, in this act more than in any other, to fulfil his promise, and to bestow peculiar blessings on the children thus consecrated to him." This theory, while it still calls Baptism a sacrament, really divests it of its sacramental character, and substitutes prayer in its stead. Prayer is the *means* of securing for others the ministrations of the Spirit. According to the Scriptures, however, prayer is a privilege, to be improved by the individual believer, to whom the promise of the Spirit is given, and which he may offer constantly, but it is not like Baptism a formal rite through which God confers the Holy Spirit upon others. It contradicts itself. It first makes prayer the *means* of conferring the Spirit, but afterwards maintains that God through Baptism, in an especial manner, binds himself to fulfil his promise and bestow peculiar blessings upon baptized children, meaning of course the Holy Spirit. It confounds Christian nurture and baptismal grace. Prayer is, indeed, offered in the administration of Baptism, but it belongs to and is an important part of Christian nurture, and not a substitute for Baptism. Everything is made to depend on nurture, and nothing upon grace. So that without nurture, Baptism does not and will not avail anything for the child. But according to the Scriptures, Baptism is a means of grace, supplying the conditions upon which the possibility and success of Christian nurture depend. While this theory formally initiates the children into the Church, it really leaves them in the world; and hence it is declared that "it leads to a confusion of thought, and a perversion of the rite (Baptism), to call baptized children church members, until they give some positive sign of regeneration, and make a public profession of Christ."

This theory not only ignores the initiatory character of Infant Baptism, but by denying that it is a means of grace, it involves an erroneous theory of Christian nurture, and leads to the most lamentable results. Dr. Bushnell describes it in his work on "Christian Nurture" as follows: "It is the prevalence of false views on this subject (Christian nurture) which creates so great difficulty in sustaining Infant Baptism in our churches. If children are to grow up in sin, to be converted when they come to the age of maturity, if this is the only aim and expectation of family nurture, there really is no meaning or dignity whatever in the rite (Baptism). They are

even baptized into sin, and every propriety of the rite as a seal of faith is violated. The aim, effort and expectation should be, not as is commonly assumed, that the child is to grow up in sin, to be converted after he comes to a mature age; but that he is to open on the world as one that is spiritually renewed, not remembering the time when he went through a technical experience, but seeming rather to have loved what is good from his earliest years. \* \* It would certainly be very singular, if Christ Jesus in a scheme of mercy for the world had found no place for infants and little children—more singular still, if he had given them the place of adults—and worse than singular, if he had appointed them to years of sin as the necessary preparation for his mercy.”

“And why should it be thought incredible, that there should be some really good principle awakened in the mind of a child? For this is all that is implied in a Christian state. The Christian is one who has simply *begun* to love what is good for its own sake; and why should it be thought impossible for a child to have this love begotten in him? Take any scheme of depravity you please, there is yet nothing in it to forbid the possibility that a child should be led, in his first moral act, to cleave unto what is good and right, any more than in the first of his twentieth year. He is in that case only a child converted to good, leading a mixed life, as all Christians do. The good in him goes into combat with the evil, and holds a qualified sovereignty. And why may not this internal conflict of goodness cover the whole life from its dawn, as well as any part of it? And what more appropriate to the doctrine of spiritual influence itself, than to believe that, as the Spirit of Jehovah fills all the worlds of matter, and holds a presence of power and government in all its objects, so all human souls, the infantile as well as the adult, have a mixture of the Spirit, appropriate to their age and their wants? What opinion is more essentially monstrous, in fact, than that which regards the Holy Spirit as having no agency in the immature souls of children, who are growing up helpless and unconscious, into the perils of time?”

While Dr. Bushnell rejects the Romish error of Baptismal Regeneration, he declares that the Puritan theory and practice concerning Infant Baptism involve an error scarcely less injurious. He does not, indeed, introduce the Lutheran doctrine of baptismal grace, but that very grace for which he pleads, and through the



influence of which children may be trained to grow up Christians, is precisely the grace which the Confessors taught that Infant Baptism offers and secures.

When the Puritan and the Lutheran theories of Infant Baptism are tested by the Scriptures, the contrast between them becomes still more striking. Admit that through Baptism God confers the Holy Spirit upon children, and every passage pertaining to the subject can be readily explained, according to the true laws of interpretation. Deny this, and transform Baptism into a naked sign of grace and parental pledge of Christian nurture, and the baptismal passages cannot be made to accord with such a theory, without doing violence to the rules of sound exegesis. Children, offered to God in the name of Christ, are said to receive the kingdom of God, but they are, nevertheless, left without grace, to choose the kingdom of Satan—they are recognized as members of the Church, which is made up of the saved, but they belong to the world, which embraces the lost—they are baptized into the communion of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but, with original sin untouched by grace, they remain in fellowship with the devil and his angels.

We conclude our lecture with the following summary of the Lutheran doctrine of Baptism as set forth by the Confessors. Baptism is a religious ordinance, instituted by Jesus Christ. Its constituent elements are water and the word of God. Its administration consists in the application of water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, by an authorized minister of the gospel, either by sprinkling, pouring or immersion. Its subjects are adult believers and their children. Its validity is based upon its divine institution and observance according to the command of God, and not upon either the character of the administrator, the mode of applying the water, or the faith of the recipient. It is a sacrament or "visible word," an efficacious sign and seal of the promise of God, a sure testimony of his will toward us, which becomes efficacious, not *ex opere operato*, but through faith, apprehending the truths signified, and relying upon the promise made by it. It is a means of grace, through which God offers his grace and confers the Holy Spirit, who excites and confirms faith in those who use it aright, whereby they obtain the remission of sins, are born again, released from condemnation and eternal death, and are received and remain in God's favor, so long as they continue in a state of faith and bring



forth good works; but to them who are destitute of faith it remains a fruitless sign and imparts no blessing, while those who misimprove their Baptism by a course of wilful sin and wicked works, receive the grace of God in vain, grieve and lose the Holy Spirit, and fall into a state of condemnation, from which they cannot be recovered except by a true conversion, involving a renewal of the understanding, will and heart. Baptism ought also to be administered to children, who, through such Baptism, are offered to God, become acceptable to him, and are received into his favor. It imposes the duty of Christian nurture upon parents and the Church, and finds its complement in Confirmation. It is ordinarily necessary, as a divinely appointed ordinance, but not absolutely essential to salvation.

# ARTICLE X.

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## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

BY G. DIEHL, D. D.

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THE rule established by those who have preceded me on the Holman foundation of Augsburg Confession lectures, of taking the Articles of the Confession in the order in which they stand, presents to us the Tenth Article for our subject this evening. It is understood, I believe, that these lectures are expected to be a true and faithful development of the doctrines taught in the Confessional writings of the Church.

"Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the (true) body and blood of Christ are truly present (under the form of bread and wine), and are (there) communicated to those that eat in the Lord's Supper (and received), and they disapprove those who teach otherwise (wherefore also the opposite doctrine is rejected)."

This Article treats of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, so called because instituted at supper time (1 Cor. xi. 20). It is also called "the Lord's table" and "the cup of the Lord." (1 Cor. x. 21.) Other terms have been applied, such as "Communion," a festival in common, taken probably from 1 Corinthians x. 16; "Eucharist," a giving of thanks, because hymns and psalms were sung. By the Greeks it was called "Mysterion," sacrament; by the Latins "Missa" (Mass), and by the Reformers "The Sacrament of the Altar."

### THE NEW TESTAMENT ACCOUNT.

The institution of this sacrament is recorded by Matt. xxvi. 26-29; Mk. xiv. 22-25; Lk. xxii. 19-20; and the apostle Paul (1 Cor. xi.

22-26). Paul's account differs very little from that of his companion, Luke.

Matthew's statement is this: "Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve" (to eat the Passover which had been prepared by his direction), "and as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

That it was instituted in remembrance of Christ is recorded by Luke and Paul. John does not mention the institution of the holy sacrament, but he records minutely a discourse of the Saviour (John vi. 51-59,) which, in the opinion of some interpreters, has some reference to one feature of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

Paul warns the Corinthians that they cannot partake of the Lord's table and at the same time eat of pagan sacrifices (1 Cor. x. 16-21), because "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God." And in another part of the Epistle (xi. 27, 29), he tells them that "whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," and "eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

#### THE DOCTRINE TAUGHT.

What is the doctrine taught in this Tenth Article?

It is simply this: that the true body and blood of Christ are present in the holy supper, and communicated to those who eat and drink therein.

There can be no misapprehension with regard to the view set forth in this brief Article, for the authors of the Confession have, in other writings, clearly and fully expressed their sentiments on the subject.

#### A GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE.

The Article, then, teaches that the true body and blood of Christ are present in a supernatural way, under the forms of bread and wine, and are received by the communicant. By the true body is to be understood, not the material body and blood;—not the earthly,

or gross or carnal body;—not such material flesh and blood as ours;—not the material body and blood in the form and state in which Jesus wore his body on the earth before his crucifixion; but that which constitutes his body and blood since his descent into hell, his resurrection, and ascension to heaven,—his glorified human nature,—that body and blood which is spiritual and celestial.

This stands in opposition and contrast to the Romish theory of Transubstantiation, that the consecration of the elements by the priest changes them into the body and blood of Christ. This is rejected on the ground of reason and scripture. No change in the properties of the elements can be detected by the senses or by chemical analysis. And Paul calls it after consecration, “The bread which we break.”

This doctrine is also opposed to the Zwinglian theory, which makes the Eucharist merely commemorative, and the presence of Christ merely spiritual.

It is also opposed to the Calvinistic doctrine which, admitting that the believing communicant eats and drinks the true body and blood of Christ, yet contends that the participation is by faith of the body of Christ in heaven, the local presence being only at the right hand of God.

Distinct from all and each of these views, the Tenth Article of the Augsburg Confession teaches that the true body and blood of Christ are in the sacrament, and communicated to those who eat and drink in the holy supper, whether they have penitence and faith, or are unbelieving and wicked—whether worthy or unworthy—the efficacy of the sacramental presence being objective, and not depending on the spiritual state of the communicant; keeping in view always that the heavenly or true body and blood of Christ impart to the believing or worthy communicant spiritual life and salvation, while to the unbeliever or unworthy communicant they impart judgment and condemnation.

How can we reconcile the apparently conflicting statements of the absence of all material flesh and blood and yet the presence of the true body and blood of Christ? To comprehend this doctrine, several truths must be always viewed in connection with this subject.

It is held that in the incarnation of our Saviour the human and the divine natures were inseparably united. We can have no conception of a Saviour except as a divine-human being,—“God mani-

fest in the flesh,"—"the Word made flesh,"—not for a limited time, but for all time. This union of the two natures is perpetual and inseparable.

Again, we can have no conception of humanity separate from flesh and blood. Christ was crucified and buried. After his burial he descended into hell; then rose from the dead; then ascended into heaven. In these three acts, or stages of exaltation,—in one or in all of them (descent, resurrection and ascension)—his body underwent a change similar to that which ours shall undergo in the final resurrection, when Christ "shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. iii. 21). And as our bodies shall be raised "in incorruption,"—"in glory,"—"in power,"—raised "a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 42-44), Christ's body, since the ascension, must be a spiritual and glorified body. His humanity is a glorified humanity. His true body and blood appertain to his glorified state.

By virtue of the perpetual and inseparable union of the divine and human natures in one person—the divine-human Saviour—the God-man—wherever Christ appears to his people, he appears not as *God only*, but as the God-man—the divine-human Saviour. So that the body of Christ, which has one mode of local presence at the right hand of God in heaven, has also another mode of presence elsewhere.

Also, by virtue of the inseparable union of the divine and the human, the body of Christ has other properties than those which will appertain to *our* glorified humanity.

Now the Saviour's promise, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt. xviii. 20), and the other promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt. xxviii. 20), imply the presence of his humanity as well as of his divinity, for the two natures are inseparable in his one person. The promise of the presence of the Saviour in all Christian assemblies met in his name, is the promise of the presence *not merely* of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity; nor the presence merely of God the second person of the Trinity as separate from humanity; because in the Saviour there can be no such separation of the two natures. The presence of God out of Christ could be no comfort to sinful beings. God becomes to us a reconciled Father, a friendly God, only through Christ, the divine-human Saviour. All the consoling promises and assurances of the



Gospel rest on the idea and truth of these two natures of our Redeemer in inseparable union. If the idea of humanity essential to his being a Saviour, could be separated from Christ, the second person in the Trinity would become merely God infinitely holy and just, and as such, a terror to all the human family in a sinful state.

But the Redeemer comes to his people as the God-man, with all the sympathies of his humanity, as well as with all the power and glory of his divinity. Now as his humanity is not palpable to our senses, though really present where Christians have assembled in his name, so in the Holy Supper, his body, though really present, is not in the material form in which he appeared in the days of his flesh.

The Scripture argument in favor of this doctrine rests chiefly on two passages, viz., "This is my body," "this is my blood" (Mt. xxvi. 26), and "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. x. 16.) It is held by the authors of the Confession, that these words occurring in the institution of a sacrament must be taken in a literal and not in a figurative sense.

#### THE DOCTRINE STATED IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE CONFESSIONS.

A few passages from the Confessions will show the correctness of the above statement.

*Luther's Small Catechism*: "The sacrament of the altar is the true body and blood of Jesus Christ under the bread and wine given unto us Christians to eat and to drink as it was instituted by Christ himself."

*Luther's Large Catechism*: "Here we shall learn first on what the power and virtue of this sacrament depend; namely, that the principal thing is the word and order or command of God; for it was neither devised nor invented by any man, but it was instituted by Christ himself, without the counsel or deliberation of any man.

What then is the sacrament of the altar? It is the true body and blood of Christ, our Lord in and with bread and wine, comprehended through the words of Christ, for us Christians to eat and to drink. This sacrament is bread and wine, but not mere bread and wine, such as is taken to the table on other occasions; but bread and wine comprehended in the word of God and connected with it. It is the

word that makes and distinguishes this sacrament, so that it is not mere bread and wine, but is and is called the body of Christ."

*Apology*: "The sacrament was instituted by Christ to console the consciences of alarmed persons, and to strengthen their faith when they believe that the flesh of Christ was given for the life of the world, and that through this nourishment we become united with Christ and have grace and life."

*Smalcald Articles*: "Concerning the sacrament of the altar we hold that with bread and wine in the Eucharist are the true body and blood of Christ, and are administered and received not only by pious persons, but also by those who are not pious."

*Form of Concord (Epitome)*: "We believe that in the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are really and essentially present and with bread and wine really administered and received. Bread and wine do not signify the absent body of Christ, but through the agency of the sacramental union they are truly the body and blood of Christ."

#### THE LUTHERAN VIEW DISTINCT FROM OTHERS.

The Lutheran doctrine of the real presence, clearly stated in these passages from the Confessions, is brought out in stronger and sharper outlines by defining the difference between the Lutheran and other theories on the subject. Notice how boldly it stands out in opposition to the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation, which is strongly condemned and rejected in the Confessions.

#### TRANSUBSTANTIATION REJECTED.

*Form of Concord (Epitome)*: "We unanimously reject and condemn the papistical transubstantiation, where it is taught that bread and wine in the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper lose their substance and natural essence, and thus become annihilated; that is, that they are transmuted into the body of Christ, and that the external form alone remains."

*Form of Concord, (Declaration)*: "We reject and condemn as false and dangerous the error of papistical transubstantiation, by which is taught that the consecrated bread and wine in the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper lose their substance and essence wholly and entirely, and are changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ; so that only the mere form of bread and wine

(*accidentia sine subjecto*) remains. And as they think, under the form of bread, which however according to their opinion is no longer bread but has lost its natural essence, the body of Christ is present, even apart from the administration of the Supper, when the bread is enclosed in the pyx, or carried about as a spectacle to be adored. For nothing can be a sacrament apart from the command of God and the ordained use for which it was instituted by the word of God."

#### ROMISH VIEW REJECTED ON TWO GROUNDS.

The Romish view here so strongly condemned is rejected on two grounds. That the consecration by the priest effects no change in the elements is evident. Tested by the senses—by sight, taste and touch—there is no change in their color, form or qualities. Tested by chemical analysis, all the properties of bread and wine remain after as before consecration. The Romish error is therefore condemned by common sense and reason. In the mysteries of the Christian religion we are never required to reject or discredit the testimony of our senses *with regard to the properties of material substances*. The Romish theory is therefore utterly untenable.

It is also condemned by the inspired word of God. St. Paul asks (1 Cor. x. 16), "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" The breaking of the bread is after the consecration. Paul calls it bread at the time of breaking. If the Romish theory were true, Paul would have said, "is not the body which we break?" But instead of that, he says, "is not *the bread* which we break?" He clearly calls it *bread, after consecration*.

This shows how little the doctrine of the Lutheran standards is understood by those who have said that these standards teach a doctrine nearly akin to that of the Papists.

#### DISTINCT FROM ZWINGLIAN AND CALVINISTIC VIEWS.

The doctrine set forth in the Tenth Article of the Augsburg Confession, and developed in the Catechisms and the Form of Concord, stands out in bold distinction from the Zwinglian and Calvinistic views. The standards group these views together and call their advocates "sacramentarians."

## REPUDIATION OF ZWINGLIAN AND CALVINISTIC OPINIONS.

*Form of Concord:* "We reject and condemn with our hearts and lips, as false and erroneous, these opinions and dogmas of the sacramentarians, namely:

"1. That the words of the institution are not to be received simply in their literal meaning as they read, concerning the true essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, but through tropical and figurative significations they are to be explained in a different sense. And here we reject all similar opinions of the sacramentarians, and their self-contradictory definitions, no matter how multifarious and diverse they may be.

"2. Again we reject the doctrines by which the oral participation of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper is denied and by which on the contrary it is taught that in this supper the body of Christ is received only spiritually by faith; so that in this holy supper we receive with our lips nothing but mere bread and wine.

"3. In like manner we reject the doctrine that bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper are nothing more than signs or badges, (*Kennzeichen*,) by which Christians may be known to each other.

"4. Also that they are only indications, similitudes and representations of the far-absent body of Christ, in such a manner that even as bread and wine are the external food of our bodies, so the absent body of Christ, with his merits, is the spiritual food of our souls.

"5. That they are nothing more than signs and memorials of the absent body of Christ, through which, as through an external pledge, we are assured that faith which turns itself away from the Lord's Supper and ascends above all heavens, there indeed becomes a participant of the body and blood of Christ, as truly as we receive the external signs with our lips.

"6. That in the Holy Supper only the virtue, operation and merit of the far-absent body of Christ are administered unto faith, so that in this manner we become partakers of his absent body, and sacramental union is to be understood in the manner stated, that is, from the analogy of a sign and the thing signified.

"7. That the body and blood of Christ are received only spiritually through faith.

"8. That Christ is so contained and circumscribed with his body in a certain place in heaven, that with it he neither can nor will be

truly and essentially present with us in the holy supper which is celebrated here on earth according to the institution of Christ, but that he is far distant from it as heaven and earth are from each other.

“9. That Christ neither could nor would promise or effect the true essential presence of his body and blood in the holy supper, since the nature and properties of his assumed human nature can neither bear nor admit of it.”

These declarations are sufficient to show how completely every phase of distinctively Zwinglian and Calvinistic doctrine is rejected. Calvin held many tenets in common with Luther on the Lord's Supper. But everything distinctly Calvinistic—Calvinistic in opposition to Lutheran—was abhorrent to the theologians of the Form of Concord. Hence they repudiate as false and dangerous such dogmas as that the words of Christ in the institution can be taken in a figurative sense. This would divest the sacrament, they held, of its essence. The words can be taken only in one sense, that is, the literal meaning. Starting out with this principle, they repudiated with strong feelings of aversion the error that the sacrament is merely commemorative; or that the bread and wine were only indications, similitudes and signs of the absent body of Christ; or that they were mere badges of recognition; or that Christ's presence was merely spiritual, whether in the sense of imparting the influences of the Holy Spirit or of a purely spiritual presence of Christ, the second person in the Trinity, as separate from humanity (which would involve the overthrow of the whole doctrine of the incarnation and that of the person of Christ); or that the one nature of Christ, the God-man, can have only a local presence in heaven; or that the believer in order to feed on Christ must ascend by faith into heaven and there partake of the body and blood of Christ; or that the body and blood of Christ can be understood only in the sense of the virtue, power and efficacy of the atonement; or that the efficiency of Christ's word and power should be so circumscribed and limited that he could not by his word and almighty power cause such a presence of his body and blood as his solemn language in the institution implies; or that the faith of the communicant should have more power than the word of Christ, as in the Calvinistic theory; or that the presence of Christ should be dependent on the spiritual state of the communicant, thus putting the whole sacramental efficacy at the mercy of man, instead of the power and word of Christ.



In Lutheran theology the Lord's Supper is regarded as a fundamental matter in the Christian system. It embodies the great central truths of Christianity. Being the last institution of the Redeemer, the last doctrine, the last command, on the eve of the great atoning sacrifice, there is concentrated into it, as the climax of his teaching and ordinances, the essence of the whole Christian system. This sacrament strikes its roots down into the Old Testament dispensation. As the earliest promises and predictions made to patriarchs and prophets pointed to Christ, and every sacrifice in their ceremonial worship ordained at Sinai pointed to him; as every high priest was a type and every deliverer of Israel a figure of Christ; as he was the prophet like unto Moses; the King of David's house, David's Lord as well as Son;—the righteous branch mentioned by Jeremiah; the Good Shepherd foreseen by Ezekiel, and the Messenger of the Covenant promised by Malachi, so he was also the Paschal Lamb whose blood shields from the destroyer.

The Passover of the Mosaic dispensation was the most striking type of this sacrament. It was an ordinance of God, instituted by the divine command, connected with the manifestation of God's power in the deliverance of his people. It was a transaction between God and the people. The salvation promised depended on the strict observance by the people of their part of the transaction. "They shall take them every man a lamb," (Ex. xii. 3.) The lamb unblemished was slain. The blood was sprinkled upon the lintels and door-posts of the houses. The flesh of the lamb was eaten. Thus the covenant was kept, and the angel passed by the sprinkled houses.

Christ is our Passover. He is frequently called a lamb: a lamb unblemished. Isaiah tells us, "the Man of Sorrows was led as a lamb to the slaughter" (liii. 3, 7). John says, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (i. 29). Peter says (1, i. 19), "The blood of Christ as of a lamb." St. John (Rev. v. 12), "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

As the paschal lamb was typically unblemished, so Christ our Passover was really perfect: "holy, harmless, undefiled, made separate from sinners." "Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 19). Like the paschal lamb, Christ also was slain, "The whole assembly shall kill it" (Ex. xii. 6). Of Christ it is said, "They killed

the Lord Jesus" (1 Thes. ii. 15). "In the midst of the throne stood the Lamb as it had been slain" (Rev. v. 6). "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood" (Rev. v. 9.)

As the Passover was a typical sacrifice (Ex. xii. 27), so Christ gave himself a sacrifice for us, "When he said, sacrifice and offering and burnt offering and offering for sin thou wouldst not, then said he, Lo! I come to do thy will, O God; he taketh away the first that he may establish the second, by which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." (Heb. x. 8-10. Quoting Ps. xl. 6-8.) "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. ix. 14.)

To the completion of the paschal ordinance and covenant it was necessary that the lamb should be eaten. "They shall eat the flesh in the night" (Ex. xii. 8). If an Israelite had merely killed the lamb and sprinkled the blood on the door-frame of the house, but refused to eat the flesh, would the ordinance have been fully observed? Would the transaction have been complete? Would the covenant have been kept? Would the angel of death have passed by the house of the man who presumed to transgress in one essential part? By no means. Man has no right or authority to add to, or take from, God's word and ordinance. So in the Lord's Supper there is a natural eating of the bread, and a supernatural eating of the body of Christ. "The bread that I give is my flesh which I give for the life of the world. Except ye shall eat the flesh of the Son of man, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh hath eternal life. He that eateth my flesh dwelleth in me. My flesh is meat indeed" (John vi. 51-58.) In the passover the people were commanded to eat the flesh of the lamb in a natural way. In the New Testament Church the people of Christ are to eat in a supernatural way the flesh of the Son of man—not the material, not the carnal, or gross, or terrene, but the celestial, the spiritual body—to eat not in a natural way, but in a supernatural.

The argument employed by the theologians of the Reformation in support of this literal construction of the language of Christ in the institution of the Eucharist is: *First*, It is the natural, proper, original signification of the word *is*. *Secondly*, Even if there are some instances in classic and sacred Greek in which the word is

taken in the sense of signifying, it cannot be so understood in this connection. In the institution of the sacraments, they say, Christ employed language only in its literal, and not in a figurative sense. It is therefore doing violence to all fair construction, to take the words of the institution of the Holy Supper in a tropical sense. This is the more apparent when we bear in mind that in the language spoken by Christ at the time there are more than thirty words to express the idea of signifying. If, therefore, Christ had intended to declare, "this signifies my body," it is inconceivable that he should not have selected a word about which there could be no question, and which could not possibly mislead any one. Tropes and figures of speech would be incongruous in the statement of a sacrament requiring plain language, and when words expressing the idea directly are so numerous. Therefore, the words of Christ must be taken in their proper and best, or literal meaning, as he utters them in the institution.

They also claim for their construction the reverence that is due to the power of God. They charge upon the opponents of this doctrine a want of regard for the power and word of God, the mighty Saviour.

*Luther's Large Catechism*: "It is the word that makes and distinguishes this sacrament. For it is said (*accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*), the word coming to the natural element makes it a sacrament. This declaration of St. Augustine is so explicit that you can scarcely find one more excellent in his writings. If the word does not appropriate the element to the sacrament, it remains a mere element. Now, it is not the word and institution of a mere prince or emperor. As it is the word of the Supreme Majesty, all creatures should prostrate themselves and exclaim, Yes, it is as he says: and we should accept it with all honor, fear and humility."

"If a hundred thousand devils, together with all the fanatics, should exclaim, How can this be so? I still know that all these spirits and learned men in a mass are not as wise as the Divine Majesty."

"To these words of Christ we constantly adhere; and we shall see who may presume to overcome Christ, and make these words otherwise than he has declared them. If you separate the words from it, there is nothing but bread and wine. If the words remain with

the elements, as they must to make a sacrament, agreeably to these words, the body and blood are there. As the mouth of Christ speaks and declares, so it is. He can neither lie nor deceive."

#### THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

The doctrine of the Confessions with regard to the divine person of Christ throws very strong light on the Lutheran theory of the real presence in the sacrament. I will endeavor to state this doctrine and the argument for the sacramental presence drawn from it, in language almost identical with that of the Form of Concord, and largely taken from it. This standard says:

"We believe and teach that although the Son of God has been a distinct and entire divine person—the true, essential, perfect God with the Father and the Holy Ghost from eternity, he nevertheless, when the time was fulfilled, assumed human nature also in unity of his person, not in such a manner as to become two persons or two Christs, but Jesus Christ now in one person, is at the same time true, eternal God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and true man born of the Virgin Mary. These two natures in the person of Christ are never separated nor commingled with each other, nor changed one into the other. Each nature retains its essential properties to all eternity; and that the essential properties of the one nature never become the essential properties of the other nature."

"To be almighty, eternal, infinite, to be present everywhere at the same time, are the essential attributes of the divine nature, which never become the essential attributes of the human nature."

"To consist of flesh and blood, to be finite and circumscribed, to suffer, to die, to ascend, to descend, to move from place to place, to be pained with hunger, thirst, cold, heat and the like, are attributes of the human nature."

"Each nature does not subsist independently in Christ, since the incarnation, so as to constitute with each a separate person; but we conceive these natures so united as to constitute one person only, in which both the divine and the assumed human nature subsist at the same time, personally united. Not only the divine, but the assumed human nature, belongs to the entire person of Christ since the incarnation. The person of the incarnate Son of God cannot be an entire person without his humanity any more than without his divinity."

The human nature of Christ not only retains its original, essential properties, but in consequence of the personal union with the Divinity, and by its subsequent exaltation, it has been elevated to the right hand of Power, Might and Majesty, above all that can be named, not only in this world but in the world to come.

But the Christian Church has ever maintained that the divine and human natures in the person of Christ are so united as to have a real communion with each other. Yet the natures are not commingled in one essence.

On account of this personal union (which without the real communion of the natures could not exist,) not the bare human nature, the attribute of which is to suffer and to die, suffered for the sins of the whole world, but the Son of God himself suffered truly, yet according to his human nature, as the Apostolic Symbol testifies, he died truly, although the divine nature can neither suffer nor die.

By virtue of this personal union and communion of the natures, Jesus the Son of Mary was not a *mere* man, but a man who is truly the Son of God the Most High. By virtue of this union and communion he also wrought all his miracles. Likewise in his death, when he died not simply as another man, but *with* and *in* his death, he conquered sin, death, Satan, hell and eternal perdition, which the human nature could not have accomplished without a union with the divine nature.

And now since he has ascended above all heavens, he really fills all things, and rules and reigns not only as God, but also as man everywhere present, from sea to sea, to the ends of the earth; as St. Mark declares, after he was received into heaven and sat on the right hand of God, the Lord worked with the Apostles, confirming their word everywhere. These operations he accomplished not in a mode local and circumscribed, but in consequence of his omnipotence at the right hand of God, which is not a particular place, but the almighty power of God which fills heaven and earth.

The Lutheran doctrine of the Person of Christ is in entire accord with the Christology settled by the Council of Chalcedon. Let the preceding statements be closely considered. Prior to the incarnation Christ was a distinct, entire divine person, the true essential perfect God, co-equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost from eternity. Yet when he assumed human nature he became only one person, Jesus Christ the true eternal God, begotten of the Father



from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary. There are two natures, but only one person, one self-conscious being. The two natures are never separated, and yet never commingled. Each nature retains its essential attributes, which can never be transferred to the other nature. Yet each nature does not subsist independently of the other nature, but the two are in such union as to constitute one person, and both the divine and the human natures belong to the one person Christ. The human nature not only retains its original, essential properties, but in consequence of the personal union with the divinity, is elevated to the right hand of Almighty power. In this union there must be a communion of the one nature with the other. So that whatever Christ does or suffers, he does or suffers as a theanthropic person, as Christ the divine-human being. Although God cannot suffer, the divine-human Christ suffers. We cannot say that the man separated from the divinity does it; nor that the divinity separated from the humanity. But Christ suffered, died, ascended. Christ rules his Church, fulfils his promises, is ever with his people. In Christ dwelt all the fulness of the God-head bodily.

As Leo says, "Two natures met together in one Redeemer, and while the properties of each remained, so great a unity was made of either substance that from the time the Word was made flesh in the virgin's womb, we may neither think of him as God without this which is man, nor as man without this which is God. Each nature certifies its own reality under distinct actions, but neither disjoins itself from connection with the other. Nothing is wanting from either toward the other; there is entire littleness in majesty, entire majesty in littleness; unity does not introduce confusion, nor does propriety divide unity. There is one thing passable, another impassable, yet his is the contumely whose is the glory. He is in infirmity who is in power; the self-same Person is both capable of death and conqueror of death. God did then take on him whole man and so knit himself into him and him into himself in pity and in power, that either nature was in the other, and neither in the other lost its own property."

In applying this doctrine of the Person of Christ to the Lord's Supper, the Form of Concord proceeds thus:

"From this communicated power, therefore, Christ by virtue of the words of his testament can be and is truly present with his body and

blood in the Holy Sacrament of the Supper. In Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, the two natures are so united that in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, Col. ii. 9.

"In executing his offices, Christ acts and operates not with or through one nature, but in, with, according to, through both natures, or as the Council of Chalcedon says, one nature operates in communion with the other that which is the attribute of each one.

"The right hand of God is everywhere, at which Christ according to his human nature is seated, in deed and in truth, and reigns present, and has in his hands and under his feet all that is in heaven and on earth; where no man nor angel but the Son of Mary alone is seated, hence he is able to perform that which we assert. The word of God is neither false nor fallacious. God knows and has within his power various ways in which he can at any time be present in a place, and not in one only, which philosophers call local or circumscribed."

It is admitted in the Confessions that Christ ascended. The ascension was real. Christ's body really went to heaven. It has a local presence in heaven. Lutherans do not teach a local presence of Christ's body on earth. But they hold that in addition to the local presence of that body in heaven, it has a presence on earth which is not local. There is a presence of that body in the sacrament. They call it a sacramental presence. The doctrine with regard to Christ's person as taught in the Confessions would not necessarily prove a sacramental presence. The proof of that presence is found in the words of the Saviour and those of St. Paul. The doctrine of the Person of Christ only shows that the idea of a real sacramental presence does not conflict with any established Bible truth, nor does it come in collision with reason. Reason and Scripture harmonize beautifully with the doctrine of the presence of Christ's body in the Holy Supper, when the whole subject is viewed in the light of the true doctrine of Christ's person. It is well to guard against analogies between ourselves and our Redeemer. Yet there is something analogous between man and Christ with regard to the union of two natures in one person. Dr. Shedd says, "The union of two natures in one self-conscious Ego may be illustrated by reference to man's personal constitution. An individual man is one person. But this one person consists of two natures,—a material nature and a mental nature. The personality, the self-conscious-

ness, is the resultant of the *union* of the two. Neither one of itself makes the person. Both body and soul are requisite in order to a complete individuality. The two natures do not make two individuals. The material nature taken by itself is not the man; and the mental part taken by itself is not the man; but only the *union* of the two is. Yet in this intimate union of two such diverse substances as matter and mind, body and soul, there is not the slightest alteration of the properties of each substance or nature. The body of a man is as truly and purely material as a piece of granite; and the immortal mind of a man is as truly and purely spiritual and immaterial as the Godhead itself. Neither the material part nor the mental part taken by itself and in separation, constitutes the personality; otherwise every human individual would be two persons in juxtaposition. There is therefore a material 'nature' but no material 'person'; and there is a mental 'nature,' but no mental 'person.' The person is the *union* of these two natures, and is not to be denominated either material or mental, but *human*. In like manner the person of Christ takes its denomination of *theanthropic*, or *divine-human* neither from the Divine nature alone, nor the human nature alone, but from the union of the two. One very important cosequence of this is, that *the properties of both natures may be attributed to the one person."*

In a complex being, constituted of two parts, each part by virtue of the living union of the two acquires properties not possessed inherently in itself alone. Matter cannot suffer pain. Yet in the living union of the two constituent parts of man, we say the nerves suffer pain. It is the union of the material composing the nerves with the mind that gives matter the susceptibility to pain.

Why then should any one question the statement that the divine and human natures in the person of Christ are so united as to have a real communion with each other, and the body of Christ, although locally in heaven, can be also in another mode present in the Church on earth and in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? If the union of matter with mind in man gives to matter certain properties which matter separate from mind does not possess, who shall dare to limit the communicating power of the union of Divinity with humanity in the person of Christ? Is not Christ Omnipotent? Can his words ever be fallacious? Shall we not take the language he employs on the most sacred of all occasions in its proper meaning, in

its natural sense, especially when there is nothing in Scripture, nor in science, nor in reason that forbids a fair and natural construction of his words?

#### THE ZWINGLIAN THEORY UNSATISFACTORY.

A comparison of the Lutheran doctrine with the Zwinglian will show at the first glance the unsatisfactory character of the latter. To make the Holy Supper merely a commemorative act is to take from it its sacramental character. That Christ in his last words, in his last ordinance, in the very consummation of his glorious mediatorial work, in the very climax of redemption, when imparting the divinest consolation to his distressed followers and instituting a channel of the richest blessings for his people for all time, should give nothing more than a commemorative ceremony, such as exists among all nations, by two symbols to aid the mind in recalling an important event, making the Holy Supper in principle nothing more than a Fourth of July celebration, is utterly inconceivable. It is the baldest rationalism, in the face of plain words spoken by the Saviour, and by the inspired apostle.

#### THE CALVINISTIC THEORY UNSATISFACTORY.

The theory seems to be this: That Christ's body is in heaven only, and in no sense in the elements; that he can be apprehended by faith only. And yet that our communion with him by the power of the Holy Ghost involves a real participation—"not in his doctrine merely—not in his promises merely—not in the sensible manifestations of his love merely—not in his righteousness and merit merely—not in the gifts and endowments of the Spirit merely; but in his own true substantial life itself; and this not as comprehended in his divine nature merely, but most immediately and peculiarly as embodied in his humanity itself, for us men and our salvation."—*Nevin*.

"Christ is the bread of life, by which believers are nourished to eternal salvation. I conceive that in the remarkable discourse in which Christ recommends us to feed upon his body, he intended to teach us something more striking and sublime (than merely believing in Christ); viz., that we are quickened by a real participation of him which he designates by the terms of eating and drinking. It is not seeing bread but eating it that administers nourishment to



the body; so it is necessary for the soul to have a true and complete participation of Christ, that by his power it may be quickened into spiritual life." "It is no other eating than by faith." "Those whom I oppose, consider eating to be the same thing as believing; while I say that in believing we eat the flesh of Christ, because he is made ours actually by faith, and that this eating is the fruit and effect of faith. They consider the eating to be faith itself, while I consider it a consequence of faith." "In Christ was life, the source and fountain of all creaturely existence." "Now since that fountain of life has come to dwell in our flesh, it is open to our reach and free use. The very flesh, moreover, in which he dwells, is made to be vivific for us, that we may be nourished by it to immortality. The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. In these words Christ teaches not simply that he is life as the everlasting Word descending to us from heaven, but that in thus descending he has diffused this virtue also into the flesh with which he clothed himself, in order that life might flow over to us continually." "We conclude that our souls are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ, just as our corporeal life is preserved and sustained by bread and wine. Our souls could not find their ailment in Christ unless Christ truly coalesce into one with us and support us through the use of his flesh and blood." "I do not make Christ an object simply of the understanding and imagination. For the promises present him to us not that we may rest in contemplation merely and naked notion, but that we may enjoy him in the way of real participation. And truly I see not how any one can have confidence that he has redemption and righteousness by the Cross of Christ, and life by his death, if he have not in the first place a true communion with Christ himself." "In the mystery of the Supper, under the symbols of bread and wine, Christ is truly presented to us, and so his body and blood in which he fulfilled all obedience to procure our justification; in order that we may first coalesce with him in one body."—*Calvin*.

"Such virtue as bread has in nourishing our bodies for the support of the present life, the same is in the body of the Lord for the spiritual nourishment of our souls; and as by wine the hearts of men are exhilarated, their strength refreshed, the whole man invigorated, so our souls receive like benefit from the Lord's blood." *Calvin*. "The body of Christ is eaten, inasmuch as it forms the spiritual aliment of the soul. We call it aliment in this sense be-



cause by the incomprehensible power of his Spirit he inspires into us his own life, so that it becomes common to us with himself, in the same way precisely as the vital sap from the root of a tree diffuses itself into the branches, or as vigor flows from the head of the body into its several members."

"The character of Christ's flesh was changed indeed when it was received into celestial glory; whatever was terrene, mortal or perishable is now put off. Still however it must be maintained that no other body can be vivific for us, or may be counted meat indeed, save that which was crucified to atone for our sins. The same body then which the Son of God once offered in sacrifice to the Father, he offers to us daily in the Supper, that it may be our spiritual aliment."

These passages from Calvin's writing show clearly his opinion on a number of points. The citations are numerous and copious enough to set forth his views in a clear light. It will be seen that he adopted many Lutheran sentiments on the Lord's Supper. In many things he was in full accord with the Lutheran standards and the views of the early Church. He held that the believer feeds on the body and blood of Christ, and that eating his flesh and drinking his blood meant something more than merely believing. He held that in the Holy Supper the believer eats the body and drinks the blood of Christ. His language is often in harmony with that of Luther and the Lutheran standards. But there are points on which he deviated widely. His Christology was defective, a Lutheran would say. He held indeed with the Lutherans that the body on which the believer feeds, is the same body that was offered in sacrifice on the cross. Although everything mortal and terrene in Christ's body was put away when he ascended, yet his body since the ascension is the true body or the same body that was crucified. But instead of holding to the sound Lutheran doctrine with regard to the person of Christ, that by virtue of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ and the communion of properties, in addition to the local presence of Christ's body in heaven, by his almighty power he can cause his body to be present elsewhere—in the Church on earth and in the sacrament of the Supper—Calvin was led into difficulty and confusion and a measure of self-contradiction, by his theory that Christ's body could have no presence anywhere except its local presence in heaven. Hence

while he retained the primitive Christian doctrine that the believer feeds on the body and blood of Christ, he was driven by his doctrine of the limitation of the bodily presence to the right hand of God, to adopt unsatisfactory methods of reconciling this with his sound views as to feeding on the body of Christ in the Eucharist. His explanation is, that *by faith* the believer feeds on that body, which remains in heaven. This involves an absurdity. The believing communicant in the Lord's Supper is not transported into heaven as Paul was once rapt into heaven. If he were so carried by a transport into the third heaven, he would be conscious of it, as Paul was. How then can he by faith feed on food as far removed from him as heaven is from earth? Calvin himself says it is not by imagination or contemplation. How then can a believer sitting at the Lord's table in a church on earth feed on the substantial food of Christ's body and blood? Calvin felt the difficulty. And how does he attempt to get over it? I will quote his own words. "It may seem incredible indeed that the flesh of Christ should reach us from such immense local distance, as to become our food. But we must remember how far the secret power of the Holy Spirit transcends all our senses, and what folly it must ever be to think of reducing his immensity to our measures. Let faith embrace then what the understanding cannot grasp, namely, that the Spirit unites things which are locally separated. Now this sacred communication of his flesh and blood, by which Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if he penetrated our bones and marrow, he testifies and seals also in the Holy Supper; not by the exhibition of a vain and empty sign, but by putting forth there such an energy of his Spirit as fulfils what he promises." Again he says: "The power of the Spirit is sufficient to penetrate through all impediments, and to surmount all local distance."

Here it will be seen that to reconcile the two conflicting dogmas Calvin himself resorts to this solution, namely, attributing to the Holy Spirit a miraculous power. Therefore every instance of a believing communicant feeding on the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper involves the working of a miracle by the Holy Spirit. How much more natural and scriptural the Lutheran theory. How much more it commends itself to our judgment. If the Holy Spirit be omnipotent, is not *Christ* omnipotent also? If the Holy Spirit have such an energy that he can fulfil all his prom-

ises, has not Christ energy to fulfil *his* promises? If the power of the third person in the Trinity is sufficient to penetrate through all impediments and to surmount all local distance, who shall dare to set limits to *Christ's* ability to do the same? Does not Christ's power also transcend our senses, and shall we think of reducing his immensity to our measures? Why then imagine that the Spirit by his almighty power should convey the body and blood of Christ from its local position in heaven to every believing communicant on earth, when according to a more scriptural Christology the body of Christ, by virtue of the union of the two natures in one person, and the almighty power of the divine-human Saviour, has a presence (not local) with his people when they receive the bread and the wine in the Holy Supper, as he says, "this is my body," "this is my blood?" If Christ by his own inherent power could raise himself from the dead, has he not power to fulfil his own words concerning his body and blood? Why then resort to the unnatural and self-contradictory theory that the third person in the Trinity should take a body which has only a local presence in one place and give it a diffused presence all over the sacramental Church? Over against this idea we offer the Lutheran doctrine as scriptural, self-consistent, harmonious, beautiful, and commending itself to the judgment of every man who will look at the whole subject in its proper light.

#### HARMONIZES THE SCRIPTURES.

The Lutheran doctrine harmonizes and elucidates other passages of the Scriptures bearing upon the general subject. While it is conceded that the Saviour was not speaking of the sacrament of the Holy Supper in the discourse recorded in the sixth chapter of John's gospel, it can be satisfactorily explained only in the light of the Lutheran doctrine. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life. For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed" (John vi. 53-65.) How can a Zwinglian explain this passage without doing violence to all fair construction of language? He must wrest the words from their proper signification. But with the Augustana and the Form of Concord before us there is no difficulty—no obscurity in these declarations. The body which was broken, the blood which was

shed, in the great atonement, no longer terrene or material, but heavenly or glorified, imparting life and salvation to the believer, who participates in the Holy Supper. The divine-human Saviour, although in heaven, is with his people on earth, and gives them this spiritual and divine food—his true body and blood, crucified and shed for our redemption, but now glorified and celestial—the bread which comes from heaven.

This doctrine elucidates with equal beauty and felicity the words of Christ when he says, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine and ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John xv. 4, 5). The most intimate union subsists between Christ and those that partake of his heavenly body and blood. They draw their spiritual life from him, as the branches live by drawing a current of life-giving sap from the vine. The bread of life which comes from heaven sustains the life of the follower of Christ. Ebrard says: "The breaking of the bread serves to bring into view Christ's death; the eating of the broken bread is a symbol that this death is appropriated in the way of a living union with the Saviour himself. As however Christ, in giving the bread to eat and the wine to drink, declares them to be the pledge of the new covenant itself in his blood, it follows that the bread and wine are not simply symbols, but that they serve to place him who eats and drinks in real communion with the atonement through his death. And since such a communion with Christ's death can have no place without a life-communion with Christ himself, or since, in other words, the new covenant holds in the forms of a real inward and living fellowship only, it follows again that the Lord's Supper involves for the worthy participant, a true, personal, central communication and union with Christ's actual life." The same may be said with regard to the elucidation of the Scriptures which represent Christ as the Head, and believers the members of a body.

#### CONSUBSTANTIATION.

The Lutheran Church has been constantly charged with holding the doctrine of Consubstantiation. Among the more recent theologians of respectable standing, who have given forth this idea, Dr. Shedd, in his "History of Christian Doctrine,"\* says: "The Augs-

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\* Vol. II., page 451.

burg Confession, in Art. X, teaches that 'the body and blood of Christ are truly present and are distributed to those who partake of the Supper.' This doctrine of Consubstantiation, according to which there are two factors—viz., the material bread and wine, and the immaterial or spiritual body of Christ—united or consubstantiated in the consecrated sacramental symbols, does not differ in kind from the Papist doctrine of Transubstantiation, according to which there is indeed but one element in the consecrated symbol, but that is the very body and blood of Christ, into which the bread and wine have been transmuted." Many writers outside of the Lutheran Church, less intelligent than Dr. Shedd, are constantly repeating the same charge. In conversation with ministers of other denominations we are constantly told, "You Lutherans hold the doctrine of Consubstantiation." It seems indeed to be almost a universal opinion among all other sects. This is certainly strange when we remember how uniformly the Lutheran Church has denied it and rejected the doctrine imputed to her. We can only account for the extent of the erroneous opinion by supposing a general ignorance of the idea attached to the word Consubstantiation. What do the standards and the theologians of the Church say on this subject? The Form of Concord says, "We utterly reject and condemn the doctrine of a Capernaitish eating of the body of Christ, which after so many protestations on our part, is maliciously imputed to us; the manducation is not a thing of the senses or of reason, but supernatural, mysterious and incomprehensible. The presence of Christ in the supper is not of a physical nature, nor earthly, nor Capernaitish, and yet it is most true." The Wittenberg Concord says, "We deny that the body and blood of Christ are locally included in the bread." Gerhard says, "We neither believe in Impanation, nor Consubstantiation, nor in any physical or local presence whatsoever. Nor do we believe in that consubstantiative presence which some define to be the inclusion of one substance in another. Far from us be that figment. The heavenly thing and the earthly thing, in the Holy Supper, in the physical and natural sense are not present with one another." Cotta says, "The word consubstantiation may be understood in different senses. Sometimes it denotes a local conjunction of two bodies, sometimes a commingling of them, as for example when it is alleged that the bread coalesces with the body, and the wine with the blood, into one substance. But in neither sense can



that monstrous doctrine of Consubstantiation be attributed to our church, since Lutherans do not believe either in that local conjunction of two bodies, nor in any commingling of bread and of Christ's body, of wine and of his blood." Reinhard says, "Our Church has never taught that the emblems become one substance with the body and blood of Jesus, an opinion commonly denominated Consubstantiation." Mosheim says, "Those err who say that we believe in Impanation. Nor are those more correct who charge us with believing Subpanation. Equally groundless is the charge of Consubstantiation. All these opinions differ very far from the doctrine of our Church."

The reader will see how utterly Lutherans reject all ideas of a commingling of one substance with another, or of the local inclusion of the heavenly with the earthly, or of a local conjunction of the two, and even of a local presence at all. The use of the words in, with, or under, seems to have misled the masses into the opinion that the Church believes in Impanation and Consubstantiation. But the Church rejects both doctrines. Holding that Christ's body is locally in heaven only, she must necessarily reject all local conjunction, or local inclusion, or substantial mingling of that body with material elements. If it were always borne in mind that it is Christ's heavenly body that is present in the Holy Supper, no one could imagine a local conjunction.

#### THE ORAL RECEPTION.

It might be asked, why has the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper not been more generally acceptable to persons outside of our communion? In addition to the fact that it has been so generally misunderstood, there has been a difficulty in the minds of many on account of the positive affirmation in one symbol of the oral reception of the true body and blood. The Form of Concord says, "We believe, teach and confess that the body and blood of Christ are received with the bread and wine, not only spiritually through faith, but also orally with the lips, yet not in an ordinary, but in a supernatural, heavenly manner, on account of the sacramental union." No doubt most minds find it difficult to discriminate between an oral and a material reception. If the reception be oral, they fail to see how it can be supernatural. They may ask, do we receive with the mouth any food that is not material food? It

must be admitted that there is some force in the objection. Men will insensibly and almost inevitably regard as material that which is received by the mouth, unless they bear in mind the preceding qualifying phrase. The oral reception has sometimes been a stumbling block even with members of the Lutheran Church. Some have even wished that all allusion to an oral reception could be eliminated from the statement of doctrines. It is not in the Augsburg Confession. But it is in the Form of Concord. I will not enter upon an inquiry into the logical deductions from the brief statements of the Augsburg Confession, whether the oral reception is or is not by implication included in the brief words of the Tenth Article. Finding it so clearly laid down in the Form of Concord, that able and scientific development of the Lutheran system, we may as well examine carefully the doctrine of the oral reception.

Let the qualifying phrase be carefully noticed. "The body and blood of Christ are received with the bread and wine, not only spiritually through faith, but also orally with the lips, *not in an ordinary but in a supernatural, heavenly manner.*" The oral reception is not then an ordinary oral reception. It is an oral reception in a supernatural, heavenly manner. The qualifying phrase "supernatural, heavenly manner," relieves the doctrine of all idea of materialism. The true view of the oral reception is simply this. The heavenly body and blood of Christ being in the sacrament in, with or under the bread and wine, not by local conjunction or commingling of substances, not in the way of a local presence, but merely by a sacramental union, during the whole sacramental transaction, which sacramental transaction requires not only the words of Christ and the consecration of the elements, but also the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine, while the bread and wine are received by the communicant orally in an ordinary way, the heavenly body and blood being there in the sacramental union, during the whole sacramental transaction, (which is not completed until the bread and wine have been orally received), the true or heavenly body and blood are also received not in ordinary oral eating and drinking, but in a heavenly and supernatural manner. While therefore it is called an oral reception, it is in a supernatural and heavenly manner. After all, therefore, the ordinary oral eating and drinking is merely that of the bread and wine. The reception of the body and blood being something not earthly or material, but heavenly, is in a super-

natural and heavenly manner. In the act of the communicant's eating the bread and wine, he receives the heavenly food in a supernatural manner—the believing communicant to the confirmation of his faith and growth in grace, the unbelieving communicant to his condemnation.

Gerhard's statement of this point is, "The sacramental eating of the body of Christ is none other, than with the mouth to receive the Eucharistic bread, which is the communion of the body of Christ (1 Cor. x. 16). This sacramental eating is said to be spiritual, because the body of Christ is not eaten naturally, and because the mode of eating, like the presence itself, is neither natural, carnal, physical nor local, but supernatural, divine, mystical and spiritual. \* \* \* The word of God is the food of the soul, and is yet received by the bodily ear."

As the Augsburg Confession is the only distinctive symbol universally recognized in the Lutheran Church, and as the expression "with the mouth," or "oral reception" is not found in the Augustana, nor in Luther's Catechisms, nor in Melancthon's Apology, nor in any other symbol except the Form of Concord, a man can be a sound Lutheran without adopting or even defending this expression, found only in the statement of the theologians in the Form of Concord.

In this abstruse subject the General Synod has wisely allowed liberty of sentiment. It seems to me that many of our ministers have not elaborated their views into a well-defined conception of the whole subject. Most Lutherans in this country believe in the presence of the Saviour in the Eucharist. By this they do not simply mean the presence of the Holy Spirit, or the presence of Christ as a divine being. They understand by it something different also from the presence of the Saviour promised to two or three met in his name for ordinary worship. Some speak of it as a *special presence*; some, as a *sacramental presence*. Many seem not to have read extensively or reflected deeply on the subject. Their want of a more thorough attention to it may arise from the abstruse and mystical character of the subject. It may arise from the difficulty of divesting their minds of the idea of materialism usually suggested by the words "body" and "blood." The tendency to associate materialism with these words has created in the minds of a portion of the laity a kind of aversion to the use of the terms in connection

with a sacramental presence. To them it appears to be impossible to divest their minds of the impression that "body" and "blood" must mean something material, carnal, earthly. This feeling has no doubt deterred some from the careful study of the theology of our Church on the subject of this sacrament.

In justice therefore to the Lutheran Church, her ministers should impress upon the minds of her people (and so far as opportunity offers, on the minds of members of other churches), the fact that the Lutheran Church in all lands and by all her writers rejects all idea of a presence that is material, or carnal, or earthly; and that no Lutheran ever did hold the doctrine of a local or material bodily presence. At the same time, emphasis and prominence should be given to the fact that while the Church in her standards and writings of many of her honored theologians, uses the words of Christ and Paul, yet by "body" and "blood" is meant something heavenly, something that has no local presence, is not locally included in the bread and wine, that does not mingle with the substance of the material elements;—that while the Church sometimes uses the words "*in, with and under,*" she rejects the doctrine of impanation, subpanation and consubstantiation.

It should also be remembered that all other Protestant standards of the large denominations, except the Zwinglians, use the terms "body" and "blood," in defining the sacramental presence. The Calvinistic standards and the distinguished Calvinistic theologians of the Reformation period employ the same terms the Lutherans use. Prejudices against the Lutheran doctrine vanish when the whole subject is contemplated in its spiritual character.

It must also be borne in mind that this subject is a great mystery. Many aspects of it we are not to attempt to grasp, much less to set aside by our own reason. Calvin says, "They are preposterous who allow in this matter nothing more than they have been able to reach with the measure of their understanding. When they deny that the flesh and blood of Christ are exhibited to us in the Holy Supper, *Define the mode, they say, or you will not convince us.* But as for myself, I am filled with amazement at the greatness of the mystery. Nor am I ashamed, with Paul, to confess in admiration my own ignorance. For how much better is that, than to extenuate with my carnal sense what the apostle pronounces a high mystery!"

It is contended by our theologians that the Lutheran doctrine is



much older than the Reformation;—that it was the doctrine of the primitive Church during the first four centuries. If this can be established beyond doubt, it must be taken as a high testimony in its favor. While the Christian fathers were not infallible, it is strong presumptive proof of the soundness of a doctrine, that the earliest Christian writers have presented it as the doctrine of the universal early Church from apostolic times. If the doctrine of the real presence in the Eucharist is given by all the early writers as the universal Church's doctrine, and no writer has alluded to any teacher who first taught it, it would seem probable that it was always held and taught from the days of the apostles down. On this subject the testimony of Dr. Pusey will be regarded as possessing great weight, from his thorough knowledge and extensive research. He first testifies that the Romish view was not held in the early centuries, but that the true objective presence of the body and blood of Christ under the bread and wine was then the doctrine of the Church. He says, "I have gone through every writer who in his extant works speaks of the holy Eucharist from the time when St. John the Evangelist was translated to his Lord, to the fourth General Council (451). And all agree in one consentient exposition of our Lord's words, 'This is my body, this is my blood.' Whence this harmony, but that one spirit attuned all these various minds in the one body into one: so that the very heretics were slow herein to depart from it? However different the occasion may be upon which the truth is spoken, in whatever variety of ways it may be mentioned, the truth itself is one and the same—one uniform, simple, consistent truth, that what is consecrated upon the altar for us to receive, what under the outward elements is there present for us to receive, is the body and blood of Christ."

A distinguished Lutheran theologian of this country says, "The Lutheran Church believes, on the sure warrant of God's word, that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ remains a true human body, and as to its natural and determinate presence has been removed from earth, and is in the glory of the world of angels and the redeemed. She also believes that in and through the divine nature with which it forms one Person, it is present on earth in another sense no less true than the former. She believes that the sacramental elements are divinely appointed, through the power of the Saviour's own benediction, as the medium through which we participate after a



spiritual, supernatural, heavenly, substantial, objective and true manner, 'in the communion of his body and of his blood.'

. "She believes that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ is really absent in one respect, and just as really present in another. \* \* \* It is present without extension, for the divine through which it is present is unextended,—it is present without locality, for the divine through which it is present is illocal. It is on earth, for the divine is on earth,—it is in heaven, for the divine remains in heaven; and like the divine, it is present truly and substantially, yet incomprehensibly."\*

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\* Conservative Reformation, 650, 651.

# ARTICLE XI.

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## CONFESSION.

BY A. C. WEDEKIND, D. D.

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THE *Augsburg Confession* may be compared to one of those grand old cathedrals of the Middle Ages. Standing without and surveying them, you get a very indistinct impression as to what they really are. Their towering walls are enormous masses of stone, venerable and moss-covered; their lofty windows seem blurred and unintelligible hieroglyphics; and their huge domes appear only huge riddles. But enter one of these sacred fanes, and a scene solemn, grand, and harmonious, almost beyond description, bursts upon the view. What wondrous carvings! what gorgeous paintings! what magnificent mosaics! Each window now seems a new revelation, and every panel of the frescoed wall and dome the embodiment of celestial truth.

So it is with our venerable Confession. Viewing it only from without, there seems to be no particular beauty that we should desire it. Its structure is not regarded very regular nor very imposing. Its buttresses have been very much battered and bespattered. But enter it with reverent step and devout heart, and you will see amazing beauty and wondrous symmetry. You will behold a grandeur and a glory, a sublimity and a majesty, that will extort from the beholder the astonishment of Sheba's queen in Solomon's palace: "I believed not the report until I came and mine eyes have seen it; and behold the half has not been told me." Every pillar of this venerable structure is an ornament, and every ornament a pillar of divine truth. And from its radiant though silent dome there comes a sacred and unceasing effulgence, which has prompted

many an enchanted disciple to exclaim: "It is good for us to be here; here let us build tabernacles."

Can this general judgment of the Confession as a whole, be sustained in reference to its several parts; and more particularly in reference to Article XI, which the unbroken custom of my predecessors in this course of lectures, has assigned me? An hour's time will put you in possession of the facts to answer this question as far as the present speaker has ability to reply to it. The article itself reads thus, as given in *Müller's Symbolischen Bücher*.

LATIN TEXT.

"*De Confessione* docent, quod absolutio privata in ecclesiis retinenda sit, quamquam in confessione non sit necessaria omnium delictorum enumeratio. Est enim impossibilis iuxta psalmum: *Delicta quis intelligit?*"

GERMAN TEXT.

"Von der Beichte wird also gelehret, dass man in der Kirchen privatam absolutionem erhalten und nich fallen lassen soll, wiewohl in der Beicht nicht noth ist alle Missethat und Sünden zu erzählen, dieweil doch solches nicht möglich ist. Psalm xix. 12. *Wer Kennet die Misserthat?*"

ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

"In reference to Confession it is taught, that private absolution ought to be retained in the Church, and should not be discontinued; in Confession, however, it is unnecessary to enumerate all transgressions and sins, which indeed is not possible. Psalm xix. 12. "Who can understand his errors?"

I may as well confess here as anywhere else, that all through the preparation of this paper I have felt, and feel now, that mine is, perhaps, a thankless task. Whether right or wrong, Confession and Absolution, as taught in this Article, have fallen into general disuse in our Church. Some treat them with perfect indifference; others with positive aversion; few, comparatively, observe them. Good men and able, in our Zion, have expunged the Article from their "Platform;" whilst others, equally good and able, and in direct conflict with their "Fundamental Principles," have placed it where the Confessions do not. Prejudice in some form or other exists against it, which makes my position not unlike that of Demosthenes who spoke Greek to the unsympathetic waves of the sea, whilst I speak English to an audience in whose breasts few, if any vibratory chords are touched responsive to my words. But, "let us reason together" and see what we have gained or lost, by the course pursued.

Now, it is altogether possible that some men may lay hold of this Article as boys do of chestnuts; they get their fingers full of prickly burrs, and then in their disgust fling away the kernel itself. Others, as they have walked through the rich fields of our Augustana, may have regarded this Article as one of those unsightly nodules, that lie so uninvitingly in some gardens and fields, being kicked about as utterly worthless and offensive, until some lapidist comes along, opens the stone, and lays bare a nest of sparkling gems. One thing is very certain, that some of the most godly and extensively useful ministers of our church have been the most strict and conscientious observers of this Article—such men as Luther and Melancthon, Bugenhagen and Arndt, Harms and Büchsel; whilst on the other hand, some of the most active disorganizers and utter failures in the ministry, have ranked in their opposition to it; such men as Carlstadt and the whole herd of rationalists of earlier and later periods. Spener's opposition to it I shall notice by-and-by. Another thing is very certain, that the ridiculous prejudice against this Article has its origin in a two-fold misapprehension: *first*, in confounding it with the dreary, perfunctory, mercenary, torturing, "*ex opere operato*" theory of Rome, which it by plain and indisputable terms rejects, and from which it is as far removed as the north pole is removed from the south pole: *secondly*, in the loose and unscriptural notions of the office of the ministry. As these points will meet us by-and-by, we dismiss them for the present. Besides, there are certain words with which, by reason of their abuse or perversion, men have associated most monstrous ideas, and then they have become afraid of them as if they were some veritable spectres. Take as familiar illustrations, the words "*Revivals*" and "*Christian Union*." In a proper sense they carry with them divine conceptions; truths for which every Christian heart beats warmly and offers daily prayers most importunately. And yet, because of the miserable caricatures that have sought shelter beneath these sacred names, good men and true have applied epithets to them, unadvisably perhaps, hastily I am sure, that have pained the Christian heart.

So likewise, and for the same reason, the words "confession," "confessional" and "absolution," words that form the very core of our Article, seem to frighten some men out of all decent proprieties. They regard them as words of horrible incantation. And yet these very words are associated with some of the most momentous events

in modern history. The "Glorious Reformation" was born in the confessional. The "old monk" at Erfurt gave the first ray of light to the self-torturing and despairing Luther in the confessional; and from before the Vicar-General Staupitz in the Augustinian monastery, the great Reformer rose from his knees a freely forgiven sinner, having had the comforting doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ applied to his tormenting conscience in this dreadful confessional. This institution, too, like a masked battery, gave the occasion to the Ninety-five Theses, that fell like so many bomb-shells into the enemy's camp and thus marked the beginning of the great Reformation. Nay more, the glory and the shame, the brightest and the gloomiest periods of our Church's history, are reflected, as from a faithful mirror, from this dreaded institution. And when the record of her inner life, which has not yet been written, shall be produced, I predict that that historian will stand closest to the XI. Article of the Augsburg Confession; and from it, as his central point, he will evolve a true church life, which will be something vastly different from the present table of dates and rattling skeletons of departed worthies. Let me yet say, in passing, that since our Church has grown indifferent to this Article in her creed, placing it among things *adiaphora*—I know not by what authority—discipline and order in the congregations, and power in the office of the ministry, have fallen into gradual and mournful decay.

In order that we may have a full comprehension of this doctrinal Article of our Confession, let me first give you a brief

#### HISTORY

that underlies the Article. This is very ancient. Its roots extend far back into the Old Testament dispensation. Thus Pharaoh confessed to Moses and Aaron, saying: "I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you; now, therefore, forgive, I pray thee, my sin, only this once; and entreat the Lord your God that he may take away from me this death only." Thus Achan confessed to Joshua and said: "Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done" (detailing his crime). Thus also Saul confessed unto Samuel and said: "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and thy words: now, therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me that I may worship the Lord." But neither Aaron, nor



Joshua, nor Samuel, could grant what these troubled consciences demanded. For the power to absolve had not yet been granted to man. That was reserved to a fuller and completer dispensation; and so these persons, one and all, "went to their own place." Nevertheless, as Neander remarks: "Each Jewish synagogue exercised a disciplinary judgment of this kind over their members." In the days of John the Baptist, all classes of men "came to him in the wilderness, and were baptized of him in Jordan, *confessing their sins*." Surely this was not a general, but private confession. As each one was individually baptized, so each one individually confessed his sins. John understood the desperate depravity of the human heart too well to have these multitudes go off in a sort of general mourning on account of sin. That deceitful thing which each man carries in his own bosom—that unfathomed abyss in which mortal plummet has never yet touched bottom—in which, amidst all fair exteriors, lie coiled broods of iniquity like nests of vipers under old stumps in fair wheat-fields, was not to be eased off in that way. Oh, no! There was the Pharisee, that whited sepulchre; and the tax gatherer, that enormous cheat; and the soldier, that petty tyrant; and the king himself, that notorious adulterer; each one got attention, and each one got his portion, too, in due season.

Under the New Dispensation new elements enter into the history of this subject. The Gospel makes immediate and complete provision for pardon and peace, to the repentant and believing sinner. Three modes of confession of sin are indicated. *First*, that directly made to God; *secondly*, that made to those who are "stewards of God's mysteries" and who "stand instead of Christ;" and, *thirdly*, that made by one believer to another (mutual). With the first two, the divine promise of pardon, on the evangelical condition of repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is connected; with the last, no such direct promise is associated. The first is not questioned; the last is not under review; the second enters full-sized into our discussion. It rests directly on the teachings of Christ Jesus himself. He is our righteousness. Through him we obtain remission of sin in his blood. But the sinner needs assurance of this. His peace demands it now. He cannot wait until he stands face to face before his judge. The thirsty Israelite in the wilderness cannot wait to slake his thirst

until he reaches the promised land. But who shall offer the sinner this quickening word? He cannot ascend into heaven to fetch it thence; nor does the Lord descend from heaven to bring the news; neither is there a voice from the spirit-land, saying: "Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven thee." What then? Where is help? The gracious Lord has made provision. He has in general appointed his Church as his almoner; and in that Church he has appointed his representatives as the "stewards of his mysteries." They are his ministers; his "ambassadors," his plenipotentiaries; to them is "committed the word of reconciliation." Their commission reads thus: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore into all the world," etc. "As my Father hath sent me, so I send you." "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." And he breathed upon them and said: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." These are solemn words. They are not the "glittering generalities" of impotent man, but the pregnant declarations of the omnipotent Christ. If they do not mean what they say, they are a monstrous deception; if they do mean what they say, there is a monstrous error somewhere. Common sense teaches that we should get into the clear somehow and somewhere. *It is an admitted fact that whatever Christ confided to his apostles as something belonging to his Church, could not, and did not, expire with their death.* And yet, though I can remember sermons, extending over a period of thirty or forty years, I have never heard one on this text. It is a perfect "terra incognita" in Protestant pulpits. Why is this? Does this passage not belong to that "message of God unto men" which we are to proclaim "whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear?" Not so did the early Church understand this language, in either the Latin or the Greek branch. The veriest tyro in church history knows the importance and the comfort this language had to many of her martyrs who went to the stake from the confessional, with a heroism and enthusiasm that struck awe into the hearts of their executioners. "In the large cities," says Neander, "especially in the Greek Church, a special presbyter was appointed for the purpose of attending to the duty of confession and of determining their proportion of church penance. By reason of a scandal, created by

the crime of an ecclesiastic, which became notorious, the patriarch of Constantinople, Nectarius, was led to rescind this office about the year of 390." And it is the testimony of the church historian Sozomen, that the abolition of this practice had an injurious influence on the general state of morals. If the evangelical sense, the sense of Christ, had been retained, without the errors which human ingenuity and cupidity invented and added, the doctrine of private confession and absolution would have continued to prove, as it was originally designed, and as our Confession aims to restore, an unspeakable blessing to the body of Christ. It would, however, be a needless and a wearisome repetition of church history to adduce the numberless examples—striking and pointed as they are—in confirmation of our point. Suffice it to say that this article was raised to the dignity of a sacrament, in both the Greek and the Latin branches of the Church. The fatal mistake in both rested, and still rests, on the Pelagian heresy in regard to natural depravity. An organic conception of sin, is foreign alike to both parties. Hence their torturing process of the enumeration of sins; hence, too, the unscriptural notion that no sins can be pardoned that have not been enumerated. It is at once seen that this whole theory rests on the imposition of church penances, such as prayers, fastings, alms, pilgrimages, etc., as a *remedy and satisfaction* for the sins confessed; whilst the evangelical element, which our Confession brings so pointedly to view, is entirely ignored. Faith in Christ and in his all-sufficient atonement has no place in this theory; nor has the Bible doctrine of man's inability to know all his faults.

Under Pope Innocent III. (1225), the hitherto observed custom in the Church—by no means uniform, though very general—was enacted into an inviolable law; and thus *Auricular Confession*, that right arm of the papacy, was established. It was distinctly decreed that all sins must be enumerated to the priest at least once a year, and those not enumerated could not be forgiven. The Lutheran Church has *private* but not *auricular* confession. She rejects, as an impossibility, the torturing and unscriptural notion of specifically recounting all our sins; though if it will do any one any good to mention some that particularly burden the conscience, like a gentle mother dealing with an erring child, she will seek first to awaken a sense of guilt and shame, then bring about an acknowledgment of the faults, and then make known the glad tidings of a full and com-

plete remission of sin through the atoning sacrifice of her blessed Lord. Can anything be more becoming, more in harmony with Christ's spirit or Christ's example, more in the very centre of gospel institutions, than this practice?

When, therefore, Spener, in 1667, abolished private confession, which up to his time had been almost exclusively the form in use in the Church, and instituted the general form now in use in most of our congregations, he was moved to this step not by any inherent opposition to the practice itself, but by circumstances beyond his control. By reason of his multiplied duties he could not properly attend to this onerous one in the manner prescribed in his own "*Explanations of Luther's Catechism*." He was frequently called upon to administer absolution to persons with whom he had no acquaintance whatever. The good man overlooked the fact that he fared no better in the general form. He knew as little of the flock in general to whom he announced the public absolution, as he did of the individuals in particular whom he declined to absolve. Consistency has always been a jewel. Spener, with all his excellencies, forms no exception. But the thing that offended him most, was the small sum of money which was usually given for confession, which, in the eyes of the uneducated multitude, gave to this duty the appearance of buying off their sins. His righteous soul was vexed, and very properly, at this sad inheritance from popery. To attend to this duty properly demanded a great increase of godly ministers; and as the outlook for this was not very flattering, he cut the Gordian knot by abolishing the institution altogether. I will not now say whether it was wise or otherwise. But this brings directly before us

#### THE DESIGN OF PRIVATE CONFESSION.

The Augustana itself teaches (Art. XXV.) that "Confession is not commanded in the Scriptures, but that it was instituted by the Church. Yet by our ministers it is taught with diligence that confession, because of absolution, which is the chief part in it, should be retained for the purpose of *consoling alarmed consciences*, and for some other reasons." Beyond all controversy it roots deeply and primarily in Arts. II. and X. of our Confession, which treat respectively of human depravity and the Lord's Supper. Often does the Christian feel with the Psalmist: "I am in misery, and like unto

him that is at the point to die: even from my youth up thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind. Thy wrathful displeasure goeth over me, and the fear of thee hath undone me." "My sins have taken such hold upon me that I am not able to look up; yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart hath failed me." These earnest confessions are but the sad echoes of Jehovah's teachings, that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," that "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?" In this soil our Article is partly rooted; but the pole-root stands in our doctrine of the Lord's Supper. That holy ordinance the Christian approaches like Moses the burning bush. As he stands at the altar, he feels that he stands on holy ground. He is about to attend to the highest and holiest mystery of his religion, receiving the body and blood of his blessed Lord. "Das Heilige begehrt man heilig zu begehren." How shall he do this worthily? His personal unworthiness he deeply feels. Here comes in the great excellence of our Article. As God has graciously provided to still the cries of the tender infant at its mother's bosom, so has he ordained that his Church—the spiritual mother of his children—shall quiet their cries for pardon and peace. She is his appointed almoner, and her ministers are "the stewards of his mysteries." To them "is committed the word of reconciliation." And in no way can they do this so solemnly and impressively as when they deal with the humble, contrite, penitent, in this private conference. There, if anywhere, the heart may be melted; its deceptions exposed; its weaknessess laid bare; its cries for mercy be expressed; its hunger and thirst for righteousness be fully awakened; its ignorance or misapprehension of the nature and design of the holy communion be thoroughly rectified, and the offers of grace and peace be apprehended and welcomed. In that holy transaction pastors deal not with rude strangers or unknown foreigners, but with the erring, distressed, deeply exercised members of their own flocks. And there the office of the pastor, the shepherd, reaches its culminating glory. There he stands, virtually "in Christ's stead." There he may unbind burdens, ease consciences, and loose souls "whom Satan has bound, lo! these many years." Through the preached word he has invited the guests to the gospel feast; in this private conference he seeks to array them in the wedding garment. And does it require a great stretch of imagi-



nation to suppose that the King himself will be present to view his guests? May we not then, in view of these solemn facts, say with even the rationalistic Hase: "The Church, by permitting this article of her faith to become obsolete, has suffered to go down one of the most efficient means at her command to care for the souls of her children."

The design of private confession, as practiced in our Church, is succinctly stated by the Theological Faculty at Wittenberg, under date of June 15th, 1619. They say, among other things:

"There are three particular reasons for observing it. 1. It affords a pastor an opportunity for special interviews with each communicant to ascertain whether he is properly qualified for that holy ordinance, that is, whether he has thoroughly examined himself as St. Paul requires, whether he has proper views of the nature and design of the Lord's Supper, whether he lives at peace with his neighbors, whether he is really willing to renounce all evil ways in which he may have been living, and whether, in a word, any defect may be found in the applicant which, through instruction and exhortation, might be remedied. 2. It affords also an appropriate opportunity to any member that may have any special difficulties, wants or desires in reference to which he may wish an interview with his pastor alone. 3. It applies in a personal and direct way God's grace and forgiveness of sins to the individual and contrite conscience, that are generally offered to all believers in the word."—*Coun. Wit., II., 139.*

Can any Christian man, minister or member, file a single objection to this institution as thus set forth? Does it not "commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God?" Could we but get rid of the vulgar prejudice that confounds this Article with the Romish practice of auricular confession and return to it, how many hundreds and thousands of our members that go annually to ruin might be saved! The felt want of something of the kind is manifest in the introduction of "inquiry meetings," or of "laboring with anxious souls around the altar"—faint, very faint imitations of our doctrine, not unlike boys astride their sticks trying to act the part of light-horsemen! How humiliating thus to forsake the pure fountain and go to the broken cistern that holds no water! How utterly futile these plans are as a substitute for the Lutheran plan! For who that has any acquaintance with them does not know that

many a sad heart comes away from them that may appropriately adopt the student's language in Göthe's *Faust* :

"I feel as confused by all you have said,  
As 'twere a mill-wheel going round in my head."

From the design of private confession and absolution, let us next turn to the

#### ESTIMATE PUT UPON IT BY THE REFORMERS AND THE CHURCH IN PURER DAYS.

And here the *position* itself of our Article deserves some notice. It stands immediately connected with the two recognized sacraments of the Church, looks back to both and reaches into both. Whatever our Church's well defined position at present may be, touching the number of her sacraments, it hardly admits of a doubt that both Luther and Melanchthon gave some sort of sacramental authority to absolution. Articles XI. and XII., that is, ours and the one following, form in reality but one; the XII. describing the inner condition or essence of repentance, whilst the XI. sets forth the external application of the gospel to the penitent; the two together are called "*das Beichtsacrament*," "*sacramentum pœnitentiæ*." Then Article XIII. treats of the number and uses of the sacraments, without specifically mentioning that number. This gives a strong presumptive evidence that the Augustana itself regards our Article, somehow, in the light of a sacrament. Else why should Art XIII. be separated from Articles IX. and X. which treat of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, if this idea was not in the minds of the framers of the Augsburg Confession? What possible reason could be assigned why the XI. and XII. Articles should be sandwiched between the Articles descriptive of the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the Article that treats of the number and uses of those sacraments? Is it likely that the most logical and methodical mind of that brilliant epoch of the Church's history, the scientific scholar and erudite author of the "*Loci Theologici*"—Philip Melanchthon—would commit such a blunder? Yea, that he should repeat the blunder of a blunder previously perpetrated by Luther in his SCHWABACH ARTICLES, in which the 9th, 10th and 11th have precisely the same position as in the Augustana? There is no escaping the point, that the juxtaposition of these three Articles by both

Luther and Melanchthon, indicates their conception of them as sacraments. But aside from this presumptive evidence, there are numerous statements of the most positive character which directly affirm the sacramental nature of our Article. (1) Luther's repeated juxtaposition of baptismus, absolutio, et cœna Domini, as three co-equal sacraments; "*dreier gleich wertiger Sacramente*."\* In his tract on "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," he attacks the scholastic number of seven sacraments as held by the Romish church, and reduces the number to the above mentioned three.† So likewise in his sermons and other writings, the same idea occurs again and again. (2) Melanchthon's unequivocal declarations in the Apology. Under Article XII. he says: "Et absolutio proprie dici potest sacramentum pœnitentiæ;" and again under Art. XIII. we read: "Vere igitur sunt sacramenta baptismus, cœna Domini, absolutio, quæ sacramentum pœnitentiæ. Nam hi ritus habent mandatum Dei et promissionem gratiæ." "So sind nun rechte Sacramente die Taufe, das Nachtmahl des Herrn und die Absolution. Denn diese haben Gottes Befehl, haben auch Verheissung der Gnade." "True Sacraments, therefore, are Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Absolution. For these are commanded by God and have the promise of his grace." It will be observed that there is no distinction made here as to their relative importance and power. What is asserted of one is asserted with equal force and directness of the others. There is no subordination or elevation as to one over against the others. There are other testimonies to the same fact, as *e. g.* the Saxon Visitation Articles (1528), the Wittenberg Reformation (1545), the Leipzig Interim (1548).‡ There is a singular and not unimportant coincidence which in this connection corroborates what has just been stated; it is this: many of the oldest communion cups in a large number of Lutheran churches are engraved with three designs emblematic of Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Absolution. Is it conceivable that in the Lutheran Church, with its well known veneration for the sacrament of the altar, such things would have been tolerated as a mere freak of fancy; or do they not rather point like so many finger-boards to the correctness of the theory here

\* See Dr. Zücklin, Augsburg Confession. 1870, page 242.

† See Köstlin, 520-533.

‡ See Schmid's Mel., p. 53, 70, 141, 438, 518, 588.

under review? If now, in the face of all this, our "Confessions must be accepted in every statement of doctrine in their own, true, original and only senses; that those who set them forth and subscribe them must not only agree to use the same words, but must use and understand them in one and the same sense;" it follows that either our practice must change, or this formula must be received "*cum grano salis*."

In that most excellent work, for the English dress of which the gratitude of the whole Church is due to two honored Professors of these institutions, and which ought to lie next to the Bible on each minister's table—*Schmid's Dogmatik*—we have the following testimony of Martin Chemnitz, that "prince of the theologians of the Augsburg Confession."

"Our theologians have often said that they would not contend, but willingly grant that absolution should be ranked among the Sacraments, because it has the application of a general promise to the individuals using this service. \* \* \* \* Though it is not properly and truly a sacrament in the way or sense in which Baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacraments; but if any one, with this explanation and difference added, would still call it a sacrament on account of the peculiar application of the promise, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession declares that it would not oppose the idea."\*

Let it be borne in mind that we have no ultra theory on this point to advocate, but simply to bring out the whole truth, as far as we are able, on this Article of our Confession. One thing is beyond all dispute, that the fathers of our Church made much more of this Article than many of her sons do to-day. In the estimation of Luther himself it had an importance that not a few would regard as bordering on extravagance. In his "Warning of the Church at Frankfurt to beware of the Doctrines of Zwingli" (1533), he says, among other things: "If I had thousands upon thousands of worlds, I would rather lose them all than suffer the smallest part of Confession to be set aside in the church. For to Christians it is the first, most needed, and most useful school, in which they learn to understand God's word and their faith, which cannot be so effectively done by public instruction and sermons." Again, speaking

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\* Doctrinal Theology of the Ev. Luth. Church—H. Schmid, D. D. Hay and Jacobs, p. 542.

of the inestimable value and importance of absolution to young and inexperienced Christians, and to awakened and tender consciences in general, he says: "If we duly appreciated the subduing and humbling influence which this confession has upon the heart, we would dig for it in the earth and travel a thousand miles to secure it." "I would not suffer it to be taken away from me, no, not for all the wealth of the whole world; for I know the strength and comfort I have myself derived from it. I would have been completely overwhelmed by Satan and unbelief, but for this institution." The inflexion of this view occurs in every possible form throughout Luther's writings. John Arndt, whose piety and devotion to God and his Church no one calls in question, against whom the charge of "dead formalism" would fall as harmlessly as a snow-flake against the Battery in New York harbor, and of whom a celebrated Romanist said: "If you had more Arndts it would be all the better for you, and the worse for us," traced his acquaintance with the human heart, and a large measure of his success, to the conscientious discharge of this duty. And the popularity of his *True Christianity* is greatly owing to what he learned in the confessional. In that wonderful book, as in the Psalms of David, Christians, of every degree of attainments, see their own photographic likenesses of doubts, and unbelief, and spiritual trials, from originals that sat before this master in Israel in private confession. Of the saintly Louis Harms it is said, that he often spent *nine hours* a day in these private conferences with his parishioners! Is it a wonder that such results followed as are recorded of Herrmansburg, and that have revolutionized the "Lüneburger Haide," and made it, perhaps, the loveliest and most fruitful garden of the Lord at present to be found on the face of the earth? How shallow and shameless, not to say contemptible, in the presence of such facts, sounds the hue and cry of "dead formalism," "high church ritualism," and "tendency to Rome," against men of God that have been faithful and true in their adherence to the doctrines and usages of the church! And how such self-complacent neophytes should be admonished to go to school awhile to men whose shoe-latchets they are not worthy to untie!

Hear yet the testimony of the great and good Büchsel of Berlin, whose late pastoral letter that has reached us sounds like the sweet song of the dying swan. In his "Erinnerungen aus dem Leben eines Landgeistlichen," Vol. I, 262, he says:



“In the midst of this great awakening, the felt necessity of private confession became apparent. Among the old Lutherans it had been generally observed. At first but few came; gradually the number increased. These were trying and weighty hours for me. Each one desired to see me alone, and, if possible, unobserved by others. Hence not a few came after ten o'clock at night. The minute details with which they entered into their sinful course of life consumed much time, so that it was frequently long after midnight before I could lay aside my clerical robes and seek rest for my exhausted body. We often speak of the comparative innocence of the rural population; but what abominations and crimes were revealed to me, especially in the directions of dishonesty and lewdness! There, too, there were many who avowedly were in search of finding faults in their own lives, and who tortured themselves not a little, by construing that into sin which the most tender conscience would hardly regard as such. Great was the anxiety of those who remembered their offences against departed ones. Nearly everybody spoke of sins committed against parents long since buried. *Through this private confession I obtained not only a clearer and fuller insight into the workings of human depravity and the deceitfulness of the human heart in general, but also of my own heart in particular.* Nowhere, and on no occasions, did I feel greater impulses to earnest and importunate prayer. My agitation became often so great that the livelong night I could not close an eye. There is something in the intercourse with souls in deep distress that awakens our sympathies to such an extent as to make us participants of their anxieties and bearers of their burdens.”

How suggestive is this quotation. It shows the value of this institution of the church as beyond all estimate. For the timid and the bold, the inexperienced and the veterans in crime, it proved a blessing which no general confession, no mere pastoral visits, no public instruction—which, in short, no method whatsoever could have so well secured. It hardly need be stated that Büchsel has been one of the most successful pastors of the present century. Thousands of precious blood-bought souls will in the last day arise and call him blessed, as the instrument in God's hand through whom they obtained peace in believing.

And right here comes in the question of ministerial authority in its relation to our Article. It is not seriously questioned that our

office is of Divine origin. Even the human element employed in inducting us into it is ordained of God. The world makes no ministers; the Church does. But the Church is Christ's body, of which he is the all-glorious head. In this Church, and nowhere else, are to be found the works of the Spirit. The world knows him not, neither can receive him. When, therefore, a sinner is convicted, when he sees himself ruined, utterly lost and undone, it is through the Word in the hands of the Spirit. But in this condition of misery and wretchedness he is not to remain. God has no pleasure in his condemnation. He has, therefore, made provision for his immediate relief. The Gospel, with *all* its appliances and its institutions, is designed for his benefit. Among these the ministry holds a conspicuous place. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." These glad tidings belong to all who hear the gospel, and who avail themselves of its rich and all-sufficient provisions. Those who with child like simplicity and trust accept its proffers of grace and mercy, are saved. No other instrumentality is needed. They accept God, and God accepts them. They are his adopted children and He is their gracious Father. But there are thousands upon thousands who are not of this class. They are full of doubts and misgivings; their faith is weak; their knowledge is very imperfect; they are near the kingdom, but are nevertheless without comfort and peace. What is to be done for them? Shall they forevermore remain in that unsettled condition? Would the gospel of peace be good news to them? Certainly not. Here then the beautiful and parental character of our Church comes in. She has provided for all such in our Article. She brings together the prostrate child of sin and sorrow with Christ's appointed minister. The difficulties of the former may be removed by the assistance of the latter. The ignorance of the one may be corrected by the knowledge of the other. A sacred and most solemn interview between the distracted culprit and God's accredited ambassador is here most graciously provided. All the wants of the former may here be supplied by the divinely authorized grace proclaimed by the latter. The *educational* element of our institution is here brought fully to view. It is not simply to confer peace, but it is also, and particularly, to make known the conditions of peace. If sin is to be pardoned, it must be on the revealed conditions of Almighty God

himself. Any other supposed method is absolute fallacy and blasphemy. What now? The faith of many is genuine, but feeble. How are they to be brought to the aid provided for them? Again and again have they heard the *general* proclamation of God's grace. But with it all they are not at peace with God. In Art. XXVIII. of the Augsburg Confession we have the desired direction. There we read:

"The office of the minister according to Christ's teaching is: to preach the word, administer the sacraments, *forgive sin*, defend the faith once delivered to the saints, rebuke open transgressors and put under ban the incorrigible. \* \* \* In these several appointments the congregations, according to divine order, are to yield obedience to the ministers, as Christ teaches: '*Whoso heareth you heareth me.*'"

Should now the blessed Saviour stand visibly before the humble penitent and say to him as he said to the man sick of the palsy: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee:" does any one doubt the prompt and immediate obligation of the contrite to confide in Christ's word? Yea, would not his unbelief be an absolute insult to Christ's person and language? Would it not be a substantial declaration that either Christ was insincere in what he promised, or that he was unable or unwilling to do what he said? In either case it would make him out a liar. Soften down the language as much as you please, that at last will be the outcome.

How now stands the case in reference to Christ's ambassadors—the plenipotentiaries of the King of glory; the men "who stand in his stead;" "who are the stewards of His mysteries;" "*to whom is committed the word of reconciliation?*" What saith the Lord? "*Whoso heareth you, heareth me; and whoso despiseth you, despiseth me.*" "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." Could language be plainer? Would it not be belittling the subject to argue about it? Would not that itself indicate a latent mistrust in the word of Christ the Lord? So that noble band of heroes, consisting, not of beardless boys who in their verdancy babble they know not what, but of princes, professors, jurists and theologians;—men of the ripest scholarship, of the profoundest intellect, of the broadest, deepest, most varied experience, and of the most fervent devotion to God and

his truth, confessed, intelligently, unreservedly and frankly, before the whole world, at Augsburg, the doctrine of the power of the keys, involved in the above Scriptures, as one of the most precious jewels of the true evangelical doctrine. In Art. XXV., they say:

"The people are diligently instructed with regard to the comfort afforded by the words of absolution, and the high and great estimation in which it is to be held; for it is not the voice or word of the individual present, but it is the word of God who here forgives sins; for it is spoken in God's stead, and by his command. Concerning this command and power of the keys, it is taught with the greatest assiduity how comfortable, how useful they are to alarmed consciences, and besides how God requires confidence in this absolution, no less than if the voice of God was heard from heaven; and by this we comfort ourselves, and know that through such faith we obtain the remission of our sins."

Brave words, bravely spoken! They give no uncertain sound. They have the ring of honest hearts and earnest convictions in them. They show no sign of mawkish fear on account of vulgar prejudice. Well would it have been for the church, if a like tone and fearless character had pervaded her through all her history! The chilling eclipse of skepticism, indifferentism and vaunting rationalism would never have darkened her bright day. Leaning on the arm of her Beloved, she would have gone forward in the strength and spirit of her Lord, "conquering and to conquer." She would to-day not have to mourn over the sad defection of so many of her children, nor present the pitiable spectacle of fratricidal warfare in her ranks—"Ephraim vexing Judah, and Judah striving with Ephraim." Nor is this all. One of the sorest incidental evils, resulting from the practical ignoring of our Article, is the "*decay of the power and influence of the Christian ministry*." However unwelcome and humiliating the admission, the fact is as notorious as it is lamentable. Doubtless there are other causes for this sad state of things besides the one mentioned; but we unhesitatingly affirm that this one is chief. Having abdicated the position assigned it by Christ, it has largely forfeited the respect and confidence with which the Lord invested it. The gold has become dim. The light is hid under a bushel. The salt has lost its savor. And feeling its waning power, what tricks, what puffings, what disgusting sensationalisms are resorted to, to catch the popular ear and to galvanize

itself momentarily into an ephemeral notoriety! Meanwhile, the upper ten derisively smile, while the lower ten thousands can with difficulty repress their honest contempt.

#### THE POWER OF THE KEYS.

It is sometimes supposed that the Power of the Keys, as involved in this whole discussion, refers not so much to the remission of sin before God, but rather to church censures. So the "*Presbyterian Confession of Faith*" seems to understand it. In Art. II. chap. xxx., it says: "To these officers" (church officers over against civil) "the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent both by the word and censures, and to open it unto penitent sinners by the ministry of the gospel and by absolution from censures, as occasions shall require." It is not denied that this idea is involved in it (Matt. xviii. 17, 18), but it is stoutly denied that this idea exhausts it. Why should the blessed Redeemer repeat with so much peculiarity and circumstantiality, just before leaving the world, what had already been so plainly revealed? The whole context is plainly against such an unwarrantable limitation. Harken to Christ's language. He speaks not of any church difficulty, or of any church discipline, but of his grand mission to earth. "As my father hath sent me, even so send I you." This mission was man's reconciliation with God. The cause of controversy was sin—"that abominable thing which the Lord hates." "To put away sin" was therefore to remove the cause of offense and to render consequent reconciliation possible. To convince men that he "had power on earth to forgive sin," was one great point of his appearing among them; and now as he was about to return to the Father, he says: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." And that you may be fully equal to the mission, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

In very truth, the gospel proclamation is nothing else than a setting forth the perfect redemption accomplished by Christ for all men. It is in effect saying:

"Be of good cheer, ye sinners; Christ has blotted out your sins; he has reconciled you to God; he has procured for you the divine



favor; he has fulfilled for you the divine law; he has procured for you a righteousness sufficient for the judgment of God; he has overcome for you death, hell and the devil; he has acquired for you the worthiness of entering into heaven: in short, Christ has already accomplished the work of your salvation. Therefore think not that you must propitiate God by any kind of suffering, and atone thus for your sins; think not that by some work or other you must earn something before God; that by your repentance, by your contrition, by your reform, by your struggles, you must save yourselves. No! All that is already accomplished! You shall do nothing now but accept that which Christ has done and suffered for you and given to you; put your trust in it, believe in it, live and remain in this belief; and by this belief finally gain salvation and enter into heaven."

Such is the complete redemption work of Christ our Saviour set forth in the Gospel, the proclamation of which is nothing else than the publication of the forgiveness of sins to men on earth, which God himself confirms in heaven.

"In short," says Prof. Walther, to whom I am indebted for the above quotation, "the Gospel is a universal absolution, brought from heaven to the whole world by men, sealed with the blood and death of Christ, and confirmed by God himself most grandly and solemnly in the glorious resurrection of our Saviour. And just because the Gospel is an absolution of all men, on account of the perfect redemption of the world, which is already accomplished, therefore also a minister of the Gospel may and shall, in the name of God, assure each and every man, who, as a poor sinner, desires forgiveness of the remission of his sins. Denying the minister this prerogative is denying him the power of proclaiming the Gospel in its entirety and completeness. For whosoever believes with all his heart that Christ has blotted out the sins of all men, how can he take exception to Christ's minister saying to a man who professes to believe in Christ, Thy sins are forgiven thee!"

It cannot, however, be repeated too often that our Church ignores and abhors the Romish "*ex opere operato*" theory. Hence absolution without faith in Christ is only an unmeaning form, since, as has been stated again and again, absolution is nothing else than the application of the Gospel to the individual that seeks it. So, on the other hand, repentance without remission of sins is only an unmean-

ing torture to no practical end. It is simply Judas betaking himself to the halter, or Saul falling upon his own sword. Why will men not understand that absolution is not the word of man, but the word of the living God? It is Christ speaking through his minister; it is the King of heaven negotiating through his accredited ambassadors the most solemn treaty of peace with his rebellious but repentant subjects on earth. Whoever comes to private confession must come stripped of all self-righteousness; must make peace with his neighbor if he has lived at variance with him; must make full restitution if through fraud or treachery he has enriched himself; must forsake all sinful ways in which he has lived; in short, he must not come in the spirit of the bragging Pharisee, but in the crushed, self-condemned spirit of the publican, and he shall go justified to his home.

In this institution, too, it will be revealed whether the pastor himself has tasted and seen that the Lord is good, and that they only are blessed that trust in him; whether he himself has rested on Jesus' bosom and felt heaven in the full throbbings of that heart that loved itself to death for the guiltiest and the filthiest of our race. Orthodoxy is a great and a blessed thing, and no man with a grain of common sense will speak disparagingly of it; but unquickened by the spirit of Christ, it is only a painted corpse whose rosy-red lips and cheeks betray the daubings of a bungling pencil, but whose death-chill repels the hand that would touch it. The best institutions have become corrupt in the hands of graceless men. The pastor who knows not his own heart with its deep folds and self-deceptions; who realizes not that his own righteousness is but a whitened sepulchre, and whose native virtues are only the sparkling scales of the serpent, how will he remove the bandage from the eyes of the blind?

#### BENEFITS OF THIS INSTITUTION.

The minister is not only a preacher, he is also a pastor, a shepherd. And what conscientious pastor does not know and mourn over the difficulties, as the Church is at present organized, to become acquainted with the inner life of his flock. To many this is absolutely a "terra incognita." Little does he know of the struggles, the doubts, the terrible conflicts, and the fiery darts of the enemy with which his flocks are assailed. Thousands of young and old

go annually to ruin who might have been saved by a timely warning, a kind word, a faithful private interview, and who perhaps longed and yearned for it, but because no regular arrangement of this sort existed, they were either afraid or ashamed to break the ice, and so they perished. Nor is there at present any remedy. Pastoral visitations, where these are even still in use, do not reach the case. There is so much formality and such civil starchiness in them, that they amount to very little at best. The coveted privacy, the confidential unbosoming one's self under four eyes, cannot be attained. This is neither the fault of the pastor nor of the people. The difficulty lies in the present system. The holy and confidential relation of pastor and people, compared by the Holy Ghost to that of husband and wife, may exist in name, because the Bible calls it so; in fact it is a myth. Say about it what you please, or say nothing about it; the present relation between pastor and people is that of a public speaker to a public audience. In the original organization of the Church, the Holy Spirit provided for the office of "pastor" as well as of "teacher;" but somehow the former is no longer of much account. And what is most lamentable indeed, is the indifference on this subject alike among the clergy and laity. The grumbling of people about their minister not coming to see them, is largely fictitious. Often it is only a safety valve to let off a little extra bile. For when he comes they don't know what to do with him, nor he with them. Both feel alike uncomfortable; and both are glad when the interview is ended. The people say, "Our preacher is very stiff;" the preacher says, "My people are very reserved." The care for souls—"die Seelsorge," of which so much is said in our "Pastoral Theology," has its place in our books, scarcely anywhere else. Since the practical dropping out of our Confession of the XI. Article, pastoral theology has little pith or point in it. It is eviscerated of its vitality. As a direct result, much of our preaching is aimless. We draw the bow at a venture. Unacquainted with the real spiritual condition of our flock, we deal in "glittering generalities;" and those that come with heavy burdens to our sanctuaries, carry them away again with the additional and crushing one of grievous disappointment.

It would be a bold venture here to say that the practice of private confession and absolution will likely become popular again, or be in any general sense restored in the Church. It is indeed true that we

live in an age of revolutions, of short, sharp turns. And it is particularly dangerous, now-a-days, to prophesy before the facts have transpired. Emphatically are these the times in which no one can say what a single day may bring forth. But this I most confidently assert, that we have gained nothing but lost much, by suffering this Article to become practically obsolete in our Church.

## ARTICLE XII.

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# REPENTANCE.

BY S. W. HARKEY, D. D.

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“Of Repentance it is taught, that those who have sinned after Baptism, may at all times obtain forgiveness of sins, if they come to repentance; and to them absolution should not be denied by the Church. And true Repentance properly is sorrow for sin, and to be alarmed on account of it, and yet with this to believe the Gospel and absolution, that sins are forgiven, and grace obtained through Christ, which faith again comforts the heart and restores it to peace. Afterwards such persons must abstain from all sin, and reformation of life must follow, which are the fruits of Repentance, as John says, Matt. iii. 8, ‘Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.’

“Here they are rejected who teach that such as have once become pious cannot fall again.

“On the other hand the Novatians are also condemned, who denied absolution to such as had sinned after Baptism.

“Those also are rejected who teach that we do not obtain forgiveness of sins by faith in Christ, but by the merit of our own good works.”

CHRISTIANITY in its relation to man, is both *external* and *internal*—objective and subjective. It contains a system of truth, not of man’s own discovery, but revealed by God. “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” 2 Pet. i. 21. It is addressed to his reason and consciousness, and he is expected to receive it, to seek to understand it correctly, to believe it, and to practice its precepts and duties in his life. It is to him a divine rule of life. All its institutions too, as the Church, with her Gospel, ministry, worship, sacraments, and benevolent operations, belong to the external or objective of Christianity.

But such external religion must have its counterpart in the soul of the believer. There must be a work of grace in the heart, con-



sisting of knowledge of sin, repentance of sin, faith in Christ, love to God and man, holiness, and an internal life of piety. "The kingdom of God is within you," Luke xvii. 21; "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. iv. 23, 24. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17.

An external religion may exist without the internal; and then it is a body without a soul, a form without a life, a system of dry, dead dogmas and ceremonies, which can accomplish nothing for the enlightenment and salvation of the race. This was the great error of the Romish church. She had an immense and most powerful hierarchy, a grand system of doctrines, rules, forms, and ceremonies—a mighty politico-religious establishment, which controlled men's hearts and consciences, making most abject slaves of them, and ruling the world with a rod of iron. But true spiritual life—the life of repentance, faith, love, holiness, and piety in the soul—was wholly lost in the Church as such. Only in individual cases, and in spite of the Church and her teaching and influence, do we find any trace of it. For more than a thousand years previous to the Reformation, the true doctrine of repentance, faith, and justification had been utterly perverted by Rome. She had rejected almost the whole system of *Evangelical Christianity*, taught by Christ and the Apostles, and had substituted in its place a most burdensome religion of works, penance, fasts, confessions, church ceremonies, pilgrimages, indulgences, and the like. Man was not to be saved by "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts xx. 21, but really without Christ, by his own works and merits. His sins were to be washed away by Baptism, as a mere work, *ex opere operato*; and if he sinned again afterwards, he must make atonement for himself by a series of mortifications of the flesh in church-imposed penances, and by confessing to the priest and obtaining his ghostly absolution. Christ and his precious salvation were covered up—yea, buried out of sight, beneath a great mass of human corruptions and inventions.

"The vital doctrines of Christianity," says D'Aubigné, "had almost entirely disappeared, and with them the life and light that constitute the essence of the religion of God. The spiritual strength of the Church was gone. She lay an exhausted, enfeebled, and

almost lifeless body, extended over that part of the world which the Roman empire had occupied.”\*

And again :

“It was especially by the system of penance, which flowed immediately from Pelagianism, that Christianity was perverted. At first, penance had consisted in certain public expressions of repentance, required by the Church from those who had been excluded on account of scandals, and who desired to be received again into its bosom.

“But by degrees penance was extended to every sin, even to the most secret, and was considered as a sort of punishment to which it was necessary to submit, in order to obtain the forgiveness of God through the priest’s absolution.

“Ecclesiastical penance was thus confounded with Christian repentance, without which there can be neither justification nor sanctification. Instead of looking to Christ alone for pardon through faith, it was sought for principally in the Church through penitential works.

“Great importance was soon attached to external marks of repentance—to tears, fasting, and mortification of the flesh; and the inward regeneration of the heart, which alone constitutes a real conversion, was forgotten.

“The penitential works, thus substituted for the salvation of God, were multiplied in the Church from Tertullian (born A. D. 160,) down to the thirteenth century. Men were required to fast, to go barefoot, to wear no linen, etc.; to quit their homes and their native land for distant countries; or to renounce the world and embrace a monastic life.

“In the eleventh century voluntary flagellations were superadded to these practices: somewhat later they became quite a mania in Italy, which was then in a very disturbed state. Nobles and peasants, old and young, even children of five years of age, whose only covering was a cloth tied round the middle, went in pairs, by hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands, through the towns and villages, visiting the churches in the depth of winter. Armed with scourges, they flogged each other without pity, and the streets resounded with cries and groans, that drew tears from all who heard them.”†

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\* History of the Reformation, Vol. I., p. 68.

† History of the Reformation, Vol. I., pp. 54, 55.

What a terrible showing is not this of what must follow when the true doctrine of repentance and faith is lost or perverted! So even Luther, when a young man, though then already one of the best educated and most intelligent of his day, was in utter darkness as to the way of salvation, when distressed and alarmed on account of sin. He knew not that he could come to Christ for pardon, nor how to come. He commenced to torment himself by penance—to labor, fast, and pray, after the papal plan, and do all sorts of works—he entered a monastery to be shut out from the world entirely, and most zealously and conscientiously devoted himself to the observance of all its rules and duties—sometimes for many days eating almost nothing, lying on the hard floor of his cell, agonizing and struggling day and night to obtain the forgiveness of his sins, until he came near destroying his own life, all to no purpose, for his soul could find in this way no peace. What a grand deliverance did God grant him, when afterwards he was led to trust in Christ by faith, and, “being justified by faith, to have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Many years afterwards, when he had come clearly and fully into the light on this great subject, he wrote as follows:

“It was impossible that the Papists should teach correctly concerning repentance, since they did not understand the nature of sin correctly. They were in error in regard to original sin, maintaining that man’s natural powers remained entire and uncorrupted, that his reason could yet teach correctly and his will act right, and that God does certainly give his grace, when man, in the use of his free will, does as well as he can.

“From this it must follow that they would repent only of *actual* sins, as willful wicked thoughts (for bad emotions, lusts, and desires, were no sins), wicked language and actions, which the free will might have omitted.

“And to such repentance they reckoned three parts, namely, sorrow, confession, and satisfaction, with the comfort and assurance that any person who did properly have sorrow, and confess, and make satisfaction, had thereby merited pardon and paid God the debt of sin! Accordingly they directed the people, when alarmed on account of sin, to trust in *their own works*. \* \* In all this there was no Christ, nor a thought of faith in him; but men hoped to overcome and destroy sins in the sight of God, by their own

works; under such impressions we too became monks and priests, that we might set ourselves against sins!"\*

And Melancthon also testifies to the utterly erroneous teaching of the Papists on this subject. He says:

"All honorable, honest men of intelligence, of high and low station, even the Theologians themselves, will have to confess, as also our enemies, convinced beyond doubt, in their own hearts, that formerly, before Dr. Luther wrote, there existed only the most dark and confused writing and books on the subject of Repentance. One may see with the sententiaries what innumerable useless questions there are, which as yet no Theologians even have been able sufficiently to explain. Much less could the people get any just conception of the subject out of their sermons and books, or see which certainly is specially necessary in true repentance, how or in what way the heart and conscience must seek for rest and peace. And even now we may challenge any one of them to come forth, who could out of their books, instruct a single soul to understand and know with certainty when sins are forgiven! Gracious God! What blindness do we see here! How they know just nothing at all about the subject! How are their writings utter night and darkness!"†

And then he proceeds to point out some of these curious questions and errors, a few of which we may give in our own language. They ask whether forgiveness of sins takes place in *attrition* or *contrition*? And if forgiveness is granted on account of sorrow or contrition, why then is absolution necessary? And if sins are already pardoned, where then is the necessity of the Power of the Keys? They say that God *must* forgive us our sins, if we perform good works, without grace—that we merit grace by attrition or sorrow—that if we hate sins, and rebuke them in ourselves, this is sufficient to blot them out—that it is on account of sorrow that we obtain forgiveness of sins, and not on account of faith in Christ—that in confession the actual enumeration of all our sins is necessary, and none can be forgiven but those that are thus enumerated—that in the sacrament of Penance we obtain grace *ex opere operato*, even when the heart is not in the work, and when there is no faith in Christ—that in the exercise of the Power of the Keys souls may be redeemed from Purgatory by means of Indulgences—and much

\* Smalcald Articles, p. 378.

† Apology, p. 168.



more of such miserable stuff. From this we may see how utterly lost was all true evangelical piety in the Church of Rome, at the commencement of the Reformation.

Under these circumstances our Reformers were required to state the real truth of God on this subject, which they seek to do in few words, in the Twelfth Article of the Confession.

We must consider well the position and object of the authors of the Confession, must place ourselves, as nearly as possible, in their circumstances, to understand them correctly. They were not *revolutionists*, pulling down and destroying everything before them, making "havoc of the Church," by uprooting "the wheat with the tares;" but they were *true Reformers*, most conscientiously anxious not to do injustice to Rome—not to find errors where there were none—but to retain everything that was true and good in Catholicism, and to point out and change only that which was false and evil. This will account, in part at least, for the language used in our Article, and the *manner* in which they present the subject. Protestant writers of the present day would scarcely think of beginning an Article on Repentance by referring first to those "who have sinned after Baptism." Repentance must be the same for all men, as well those who have not been baptized as those who have. In all cases it must consist of the two parts, sorrow for sin and faith in Christ, as they have it, and it is equally necessary for all men. But at the time of the Reformation, especially among Romanists, Repentance, as far as they had any ideas on the subject at all, was associated with sins committed after Baptism, confessions to the priest and absolution. To this state of things the shape of the Article is undoubtedly due.

A brief analysis of the doctrines taught or implied in the Article gives us the following result:

1. *That persons may sin or fall again after Baptism.* "Quod lapsus post baptismum," that such as have *fallen* after Baptism, even those who have been justified, may again lose the Holy Spirit, and hence the Confessors "condemn those who deny that men once justified can lose the Spirit of God."

It is, of course, implied that sins are forgiven in true Baptism, whether the subject be an infant or an adult person. And yet, whatever be the effects or benefits of Baptism, whatever change the Spirit of God may produce in the soul, through it as a means, and



in the condition and relations of the subject, they are not such that he may not again sin or fall from the new state into which it placed him.

2. *But the condition of such fallen ones, though sad and greatly to be deplored, is not utterly hopeless, not beyond the reach of mercy and recovery.* Like other sinners they "may at all times obtain forgiveness of their sins, if they repent." Not by a system of penance or self-inflicted tortures can they be restored, not by means of indulgences, meritorious works, self-denials and sufferings, as the Romanists taught; but by *Repentance*. Whenever they truly repent their sins will be forgiven them. But without true repentance there is no pardon and no salvation.

3. *That as God pardons such fallen ones when they truly repent, "the Church should not refuse to grant absolution unto them."* As they have obtained the *divine* forgiveness, the Church ought also to grant its forgiveness, and gladly restore these returning prodigals to membership and the full enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of members.

4. *But true Repentance, in its full and complete sense, properly consists of two parts. The one is sorrow for sin, and the other is faith in Christ.* And, though these two parts may be considered separately, yet they are so united as to constitute one complete whole. Neither can be fully presented, understood or attained without the other. The one wounds, the other heals; the one alarms and condemns, the other pardons and brings peace again to the soul; the one points to Sinai, the other to Calvary.

5. *That good works and reformation of life must follow, if our repentance be genuine; for these are its legitimate fruits.* No person who has truly repented of sin can continue still to live in sin, for this would be a contradiction. He cannot be sorry for and hate that which he still loves and practices. On the contrary, he must forsake all sin, lead a pious and holy life, and "perform all manner of good works."

6. Holding these doctrines, the Reformers, in our Article, reject the four following errors:

*First*, That those who have once become pious may not again lose the Spirit of God and fall into sin.

*Second*, That men may attain to such perfection in this life that they cannot sin any more.

*Third*, That those who have fallen into sin after Baptism, should not be restored again by the Church, even when they truly repent.

*Fourth*, That justification or pardon of sin is not obtained by faith in Christ, but by our own merits and good works.

These were regarded as serious errors by our Confessors, and are therefore here condemned and rejected.

So much by way of an analysis of our Article. It is plain that a full development of all these points would require a volume and not a brief lecture. The field is quite too vast, and we must therefore pass over some points very hastily or not touch them at all, and give our attention mainly to one or two.

#### I. REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS AS CONNECTED WITH BAPTISM.

The Confessors do not state in this Twelfth Article that they hold that sins are forgiven in Baptism, and that the baptized person is in a state of grace or favor with God: but this is taught by implication. Hence sinning after Baptism is represented as "losing the Spirit of God," and falling from grace, and the restoration of such as requiring *special* repentance and absolution, that is, pardon and re-admission by the Church. It is, however, not difficult to ascertain what they did hold on this subject by referring to other articles of the Confession and other sources of information. In Article Two, which treats of *Original Sin*, they say:

"This disease, or natural depravity, is truly sin, condemning and bringing eternal death upon all that are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit."

Here the *new birth* is "by baptism and the Holy Spirit:" the Holy Spirit as the agent and baptism as the means. The condition and the relations of the baptized person are so changed that it may be said of him, he is "born again," and is no longer condemned to eternal death on account of original sin.

In the *Ninth* Article, which treats of Baptism, they say:

"Of Baptism, it is taught that it is necessary (*ad salutem*, adds the Latin), and that through it grace is offered, and that children also ought to be baptized, who by such baptism are dedicated to God, and received into his favor."

In *Luther's Smaller Catechism* we have several important questions and answers on this subject, as follows:

*Question* : "What are the gifts or benefits of baptism?"

*Answer* : It worketh forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and confers everlasting salvation on all who believe, as the word and promise of God declare."

*Question* : "How can water produce such great effects?"

*Answer* : "It is not the water that produces them, but the *word of God* which accompanies and is connected with the water, and our faith, which relies on the word of God connected with the water. For the water without the word of God is simply water, and no baptism. But when connected with the word of God, it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life, and a 'washing of regeneration' in the Holy Ghost."

From this, and much more that might be cited, it is clear enough that the Confessors held and taught that sins are forgiven, and grace is bestowed, in the administration of the sacrament of Baptism. I suppose that this point will not be disputed.

But what is true Baptism as they held it? I answer that they regarded the four following things as necessary to constitute true Baptism : 1. *The divine agency* : the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. 2. *The human agency* : The use of water applied to the subject in a proper manner by an authorized person. 3. *The word of God*, "which accompanies and is connected with the water." The act must not only be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," but with prayer, and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in obedience to his express command. 4. "*Our faith*, confiding in this word of God in the use of baptismal water." If any one of these be absent, it is no Baptism. If the Holy Spirit, the divine agency, be absent, or there be no water used in a proper way, or no word or command of God, or there be no true faith in the administrator, or the subject, or the persons concerned and present, it is no baptism. But having all these present, then, according to the teaching of our Confessors, the subject is born again by Baptism and the Holy Spirit, or, in the language of Christ to Nicodemus, "born of water and of the Spirit." Then such baptized person, whether infant or adult, is delivered from condemnation and eternal death. To him the grace of God is offered, as he is offered and dedicated to God. He is received into the divine favor. The Holy Spirit, through this ordinance as a means, and because of "faith confiding in the word of God," "causes

the forgiveness of sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to those that believe." Such a baptized person must now be declared pardoned, free from sin, a child of God and an heir of heaven.

This seems to be the true doctrine of the Lutheran Church on this subject. It is no "baptismal regeneration" *ex opere operato*, as the Papists held, and still hold it. It is no BAPTISMAL OR WATER regeneration at all; for "it is not the water that does it." But it is Holy Ghost regeneration, through Baptism, the word of God, and prayer, as means. It will scarcely be denied that an infant, being thus baptized, may be regenerated by the Holy Ghost without repentance and faith on *its own part*, it being, properly speaking, capable of neither; but adult persons are proper subjects for Baptism only when they repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. iii. 5. Of course we can speak of infant regeneration, in any case, only in the limited specific sense of the word as denoting alone the *divine agency*—the work of the Holy Spirit, the subject being wholly passive. It is clear also that the Scriptures do connect pardon of sin and salvation with Baptism. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. On the day of Pentecost, when the awakened multitudes asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter replied: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," Acts ii. 38. And the Lord sent the devout Ananias to the now penitent Saul of Tarsus, to say to him, among other things: "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," Acts xxii. 16. From these and other passages of God's word we see that faith and Baptism secure salvation—that men are born again "of water and of the Spirit"—that they must *repent and be baptized* in the name of Jesus Christ "for the remission of sins"—that by Baptism Paul was to "*wash away* his sins"—that it is "*the washing* (or bath) *of regeneration*, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." It is a lame subterfuge to say, as Dr. Macknight has done and thousands of others with him, that in all these passages it does not mean that "any change in the nature of the baptized per-



son is produced by Baptism, but it is an emblem of the purification of his soul from sin."\* Of course Baptism itself does not produce the change—"it is not the water that produces it," we must say again with Luther; but it is "the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" or "the renewing" (the change), "is by the Holy Ghost."

Though this doctrine has been greatly misunderstood and perverted, especially in the Church of Rome, its history is interesting in a high degree, and sheds much light upon the subject. We are told that it was customary among the Jewish doctors, "when they admitted a proselyte into their Church by Baptism, always to speak of him as *one born again*." The manner of speaking and teaching of Christ and the Apostles, we have just seen. And as far back as the *second century*, Mosheim (Vol I, p. 69) tells us, "that adult persons were prepared for Baptism by abstinence, prayer and other pious exercises"—"that the Sacrament of Baptism was administered publicly twice every year," namely, at Easter and Pentecost—"that the persons that were to be baptized repeated the Creed, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil and his pompous allurements"—"that after Baptism, they received the sign of the Cross, were anointed, and, by prayers and the imposition of hands, were solemnly recommended to the mercy of God, and dedicated to his service; in consequence of which they received milk and honey, which concluded the ceremony." All this was evidently intended to convey the idea that these baptized persons were now "new creatures," cleansed from sin and received into favor with God.

In the *third century*, says the same author (Vol. I., p. 91, 92):

"There were twice a year stated times, when baptism was administered to such as, after a long course of trial and preparation, offered themselves as candidates for the profession of Christianity. \* \* The remission of sin was thought to be its immediate and happy fruit; while the bishop, by prayer and the imposition of hands, was supposed to confer those sanctifying gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are necessary to a life of righteousness and virtue. \* \* After the administration of baptism, the candidates returned home, adorned with crowns, and arrayed in white garments, as sacred emblems—the former, of their victory over sin and the world; and the latter, of their inward purity and innocence. \* \* It was a custom with

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\* See Macknight on the Epistles, Titus iii. 5,



many in this century, to put off their baptism to the last hour, that thus, immediately after receiving by this rite the remission of their sins, they might ascend, pure and spotless, to the mansions of life and immortality."

Thus Constantine the Great lived nearly a quarter of a century without baptism, after he professed to have become a believer in Christianity, and received the ordinance only a few days before his death.

Thus gradually men fell into the error of changing this sacrament from a *means* into an efficient *cause*. People were no longer "born of water and of the SPIRIT;" but the water itself did the work. All baptized persons were regenerated and pardoned—washed and purified from all sin—by the efficient working of the ordinance itself. And this error, canonized in the Church of Rome, has come down to our own times. No necessity for repentance, faith, and a regeneration of the soul by the Spirit of God—Baptism has done it all.

The only trouble was in regard to sins committed *after* Baptism. What was to be done with these? Could persons be baptized again to obtain the remission of their sins committed after Baptism? Certainly not. The Novatians (A. D. 250), referred to in our Article, would not admit those into the Church again, who had fallen into sin after Baptism, even if they did repent. Novatus held that the Church was a society of the *pure*—"Cathari"—and as sin after Baptism made men impure, they could not be re-admitted. But the Western or Latin Church took the opposite view of the case, and a large council resolved "That they should be treated and healed with the remedies of repentance"—this afterwards meant *penance*, and is the remedy to this day in the Catholic Church.

Neander gives the following interesting account of this subject:

"The controversy with the Novatian party turned upon two general points; one relating to the principles of penitence, the other to the question, what constitutes the idea and essence of a true Church? In respect to the first point of dispute, Novatian had been often unjustly accused of maintaining that no person, having once violated his baptismal vows, can ever obtain forgiveness of sins—that he is certainly exposed to eternal damnation. But, first, Novatian by no means maintained that a Christian is a perfect saint; he spoke here not of all sins, but assuming as valid the distinction between "peccata venialia" and "peccata mortalia," he was treating only of

the latter. Again, he was speaking by no means of *the divine forgiveness of sin*, but only of the Church tribunal—of absolution by the Church. The *Church*, he would say, has no right to grant absolution to a person who, by mortal sin, has trifled away the pardon obtained for him by Christ, and appropriated to him by Baptism. No counsel of God, touching the case of such persons, has been revealed; for the forgiveness of sin which the Gospel assures us of, relates only to sins committed before Baptism. We ought, doubtless, to be interested for such fallen brethren; but nothing can be done for them save to exhort them to repent, and to commend them to God's mercy.

With regard to the second part of the controversy, the idea of the Church, Novatian maintained that one of the essential marks of a true Church being purity and holiness, every Church which, neglecting the exercise of discipline, tolerated in its bosom, or re-admitted to its communion, such persons as, by gross sins, have broken their baptismal vow, ceases by that very act to be a true Christian Church, and forfeits all the rights and privileges of such a Church.”\*

Thus far Neander. Pacianus puts it short, thus:

“Quod mortale peccatum ecclesia donare non possit, immo quod ipsa pereat recipiendo peccantes.”

With such facts as these before them in the history of the Church, and fully acquainted with the theology of the times, and the modes of thought and expression customary among men of that day, the authors of the Augsburg Confession, as we have already stated in our analysis of this Twelfth Article, held that in true Baptism, both of adults and infants, God does forgive their sins and receive them into his favor—that is the teaching of God's word—that they are “born of water and of the Spirit.” And as *infant* Baptism was universally practiced in the Catholic Church, there was no repentance necessary or possible in their case, as a preparation for Baptism or pardon of sin. But they might sin *after* Baptism, and could not be baptized again for pardon, or as often as they might sin, and hence they commence their article as they do: “Of Repentance it is taught, that those who have sinned after Baptism, may at all times obtain forgiveness of sins” (not by being baptized again or often, but) “if they come to repentance.” Of course this implies

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\* Hist. Christ. Religion and Church, Vol. I., pp. 243-246.

equally that all men, adults, who have not been baptized, must repent and believe, both to be fit subjects for Baptism, and to obtain pardon of sin.

## II. REPENTANCE, ITS NATURE AND NECESSITY.

In the brief time allowed us in this lecture, we cannot now attempt a full discussion of the great subject of Repentance, as held and taught by Lutherans. We must content ourselves with a few hasty remarks.

Two Greek words are used in the Scriptures which are uniformly translated into English by the one word *Repentance*, which yet seem to have different meanings. They are μετανοία and μεταμέλεια, from the verbs μετανοῶ and μεταμέλομαι. It has been observed, and it seems to me satisfactorily shown by Dr. George Campbell, in his Notes on the Gospels, that μετανοία "denotes a change to the better," and Μεταμέλεια, "barely a change, whether it be to the better or the worse"—"that the former marks a change of mind that is durable and productive of consequences; the latter expresses only a present uneasy feeling of regret or sorrow for what is done, without regard either to duration or to effects; in fine, that the first may properly be translated into English, *to reform*; the second, *to repent*, in the familiar acceptation of the word." He cites Favorinus (an Italian scholar, died 1527,) as defining μεταμέλεια "*as dissatisfaction with one's self, for what one has done*," "which exactly hits the meaning of the word *repentance*; whereas μετανοία is defined, *a genuine correction of faults*, a change from worse to better. We cannot more exactly define the word "*reformation*." "Luther, in his German translation, has generally distinguished the two verbs, rendering μετανοεῖν, *Busse thun*, and μεταμέλεσθαι *reuen, gereuen*."

This agrees well with what our Confessors present in the Article under consideration, that Repentance is "sorrow for sin,"—then should follow good works, which are fruits of Repentance. Hence it is well said, "Reformation of life must follow Repentance"—nay, true Repentance is the very first act in reformation of life, and he who does not lead a new and holy life, does not know what true Repentance is.

Accordingly, in our Catechism it is said: "Repentance is a total change of heart and mind." Schmid, in his Dogmatik, says: "The first working of divine grace is to draw man away from his sinful

state by producing in him real pain on account of sins committed, an earnest desire to be delivered from their control." (p. 361).

And this brings us to the other point made by our Confessors, namely, *That true Repentance has two parts, sorrow for sin, and faith in Christ.*

1 *It is sorrow for sin.* This places it in our emotional nature—sorrow, pain, terror, alarm, regret, are among the expressions used to designate these feelings. But not every kind of sorrow constitutes true Repentance. Paul says: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. vii. 10.) "Godly sorrow" is that required by God, produced by his truth and Spirit in an intelligent conviction of the evil and heinousness of sin, as committed against a good and merciful God and his just and holy law, and that leads to a thorough change of life. In this verse the two Greek words for repentance, already referred to, are used: "The sorrow according to God worketh *μετανοιαν*, a reformation, ending in salvation, *αμεταμελητον*, not to be grieved over or regretted." But the sorrow arising from worldly considerations worketh death.

Not even every kind of sorrow *for sin*, is, in the true sense, a godly sorrow. That which arises from fear of punishment—and is in the nature of terror or alarm—can lead only to despair and misery. This last has usually been called *legal*, but the former *evangelical* Repentance.

And while it is true that repentance has its seat in our *emotional* nature, it is also true that our emotions must be reached through the *intellect*. Hence there must be *knowledge* of sin and intelligent *conviction* of sin. There can be no true repentance without a correct knowledge of sin, at least to some extent. Men are never sorry for anything which they have done, and, in the nature of the case, it is impossible they should be, unless they know precisely *what* it is, and *why* they are sorry for it. It is simply absurd to say that you are sorry for sin, but you do not know what sin is, nor why you should be sorry for it.

*Conviction* of sin is in the judgment and conscience, which are convinced of its existence in ourselves. That we have broken the divine law by acts of omission and commission, in innumerable instances, in thoughts, feelings, words, motives, and desires, is clearly seen and felt. We have been led by God's Holy Spirit to compare



our lives and actions with the divine law, and we know that we are sinners "by the holy commandments, which we have not kept." And the reason why we should be sorry for these sins is, because God's law is right, good, pure, and holy; but our conduct and lives have been wrong, impure, and injurious to ourselves and our fellow-men, and dishonorable to God. And this sorrow is not *active*, but *passive*—not self-made or self-imposed, as if we must *make* ourselves feel by certain direct efforts and exercises, as by singing and working upon the imagination, by relating terrible scenes and stories, arousing the animal passions and sympathies in times of excitement. But it is produced by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, in the application of the truth to the heart and conscience. We see the evil we have done—the injury to God and his government—to our fellow-men and the cause of virtue and piety—to ourselves, our bodies and souls—and regret it and mourn over it. This begets a sense of shame for the filthiness, vileness, and degrading influence of sin. It grieves us that we have sinned against the love and mercy of God, so abundantly shown us in all our past lives, and especially in the gift of Jesus Christ, and his sufferings and death for us.

"These feelings are different in degree according to the natural temperament of the individual, the clearness of his views, the amount of his religious knowledge, and his actual guilt."\*

This must produce *hatred* of sin and a turning from it—*Confession* of it, and an earnest desire to be delivered from it. No cloaking or hiding it, as God cannot be deceived—no excusing it, as it is seen to have been committed, in many instances, voluntarily, against light and knowledge, and the warnings of God and good men.

*Repentance is a continuous work.* Many persons seem to have the idea that they must repent *once* of all their sins, and then be done with it forever—they must have great sorrow, so as to be completely broken down and overcome; and the more terrible their distress, excitement, lamentations and weeping, the deeper and truer their repentance is supposed to be; but when "they get through," then they are done with repentance, unless, indeed, they should "fall from grace," which is almost certain to be the case; then they must be renewed at the next "protracted meeting" or time of revival,

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\* S. S. Schmucker, Pop. Theol., p. 159.



by going through the same process! But must we not reply to all this, that as long as there is any sinning, even though it be only through infirmity and incautiousness, there must also be repenting? Luther says:

“Baptizing with water signifies that the old Adam in us is to be drowned and destroyed by daily sorrow and Repentance, together with all sins and evil lusts; and that again the new man should daily come forth and rise, that shall live in the presence of God in righteousness and purity forever.”

And in the Smalcald Articles, he says:

“And this Repentance continues with Christians until death, for it contends with the remaining sins in the flesh during the whole of life; and St. Paul testifies, in the 7th Chapter of the Romans, that he contends with “the law of sin which is in his members;” and that not by his own unaided powers, but by the gift of the Holy Ghost, which follows upon the forgiveness of sins. This same gift (the working of the Holy Spirit) daily cleanses and scourges out of us our remaining sins, and labors to make us entirely pure and holy.”

And what are the facts of the case in the experience and consciousness of the very best and most faithful of Christians? Do they ever feel themselves to be anything but sinners, pardoned and saved by grace? *Knowledge* of sin is a part of our Repentance; but can the knowledge of sin ever cease and be forgotten? Does not the *conviction* of sin abide always? Do good men ever cease to confess their sins, and to mourn over them even in the midst of their most exalted spiritual rejoicings in a Saviour's love? Never, never! And is this not continued repentance?

2. *True Repentance includes Faith in Christ.* It has been a mooted question whether faith comes before or after repentance. But faith is of two kinds, usually called *historical* and *justifying*. The former is simply *belief of the truth* upon satisfactory evidence, and the latter is *trust in Christ* for salvation. But it is clear that belief of the truth, or historical faith, must come *before* repentance, as it is by the truth that men come to a knowledge of sin and are led to see the necessity of repentance; but *justifying* faith can only come *after* repentance, grows out of it and is a part of it. Repentance, in its first part or narrower sense, is an indispensable antecedent and condition of saving faith, without which it cannot exist, just as the breaking up of

“the fallow ground” and the preparation of the soil are necessary to the sprouting and growth of the seed sown upon the earth. Justifying faith cannot properly be said to include repentance, because, as we see, it must, in the order of time, come after it, and cannot take place without it; but repentance is not and cannot be complete without faith, and is therefore a part of it. The fruit cannot be said to include the tree that bears it, and without which it could not exist; but it is part of the tree upon which it grows.

Let us hear the great Melancthon a few minutes on this subject:

“But inasmuch as our opponents condemn what we have stated in regard to the two parts of Repentance, we must show that not we, but the Scriptures, have thus set forth these two parts of repentance or conversion. Christ says: ‘Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ (Matt. xi. 28.) Here are two parts. The labor and heavy burden of which Christ speaks are the sorrow for sin, the great terror of the wrath of God felt in the heart. The other, *the coming to Christ*, is FAITH, which believes that for Jesus’ sake sins are forgiven us, and that by the Holy Spirit we are “born again” and made alive. Therefore these two must be the most important part of Repentance, namely, sorrow for sin and faith in Christ. And in Mark i. 15, Jesus says again: ‘Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.’ First, he makes us sinners and alarms us; and then comforts us, and announces the forgiveness of sins. For, to believe the Gospel is not merely to receive the histories which it contains, for such faith even the devils have; but it properly means to believe that through Christ sins are forgiven us, for this is the faith which the Gospel preaches to us. Here also you see the two parts: sorrow or alarm of the conscience, when he says, ‘Repent;’ and faith, when he says, ‘Believe the Gospel.’ Should now any one say, Christ includes also the fruits of repentance, yea, the whole new life, we shall not seriously object to this. It is enough for us here, that the Scriptures expressly set forth these two parts; sorrow for sin, and faith.

“So also Paul, in all his Epistles, as often as he treats of the manner of our conversion, unites these two parts. *The dying of ‘our old man’* (Rom. vi. 6), contrition and terror on account of the wrath of God and the judgment to come, and, on the contrary, our *renewing* by faith. For by faith we are comforted and brought to life again, and are saved from death and hell. Of these two parts he

speaks clearly, in Rom. vi. 2, 4, 11, that we are 'dead indeed unto sin,' caused by sorrow and alarm, the first part of repentance, and are again to be *raised up with Christ*, brought about through faith, when we again obtain life and comfort. And, inasmuch as faith is to bring joy and peace to the conscience again, Rom. v. 1, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God,' it follows that before there was terror and anguish in the soul. Therefore sorrow for sin and faith must go together."\*

It is clear then that our Confessors are correct in stating that true Repentance has these two parts, sorrow for sin and faith in Christ, and that no amount of contrition and alarm which does not lead us to trust in Christ for salvation, can be regarded as true Repentance.

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\* Müller's Sym. Bücher, p. 173.

## ARTICLE XIII.

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# THE USE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

BY W. M. BAUM, D. D.

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THE able and distinguished lecturers who have preceded me, have been pleased, without exception, and with most manifest propriety and advantage, to discuss the Articles of the Augsburg Confession in the order of their occurrence. The subject of the *Thirteenth Article*, which falls to our present examination and study, is intensely interesting, and pre-eminently adapted to the wants and peculiarities of our times. It belongs very pertinently to the question of the day. Of the entire number, we could scarcely have selected one more promising or more desirable. May its discussion be attended with the divine blessing!

No sooner had the work of the Reformation been fully inaugurated, than it became manifest that a vital pivotal point was to be found in the question of *the Sacraments*. Rome had so perverted the design and intent thereof, in the abuses of the Mass, that no reconciliation was possible. Unwilling as the Reformers were to make an irreconcilable breach with existing church authorities, they nevertheless refused to sacrifice or compromise the truth for the sake of temporary quietude. This question, therefore, of necessity, occupies a very prominent place in the *Augsburg Confession*.

We have already had presented in learned and exhaustive discussions, upon the *Ninth* and *Tenth* articles, the teachings of the word of God as held by the Reformers, and the Church since then,

of the doctrines of *Baptism*\* and the *Lord's Supper*,† separately considered. It remains, in order to complete the cycle of sacramental theology, to consider the question of *the sacraments* in the abstract, as it is set forth in the *Thirteenth* article, whose caption is in these words: "*Of the Use of the Sacraments.*"

Not only did diversity and conflict with Rome appear upon this great question, but very soon were these manifest within the narrow circle of the disenthralled Church. Luther and Zwingli, at Marburg, are both a type and a prophecy of the conflicting tendencies and theories in Protestantism. Around one or the other have gathered the mind and the heart of all succeeding teachers and expounders of God's word, maintaining each, to this hour, his own interpretation with as unyielding pertinacity and divergent conclusions, as did the great champions, their prototypes, upon that historic occasion.

The accepted English version of this Article of the Augsburg Confession is thus given, and is a faithful rendering of the original:‡

*"Concerning the use of the Sacraments our Churches teach, that they were instituted not only as the marks of a Christian profession amongst men; but rather as signs and evidences of the will of God toward us, for the purpose of exciting and confirming the faith of those who use them. Hence the sacraments ought to be received with faith in the promises which are exhibited and set forth by them.*

*"They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify (ex opere operato) by the mere performance of the act, and who do not teach that faith, which believes our sins to be forgiven, is required in the use of the sacraments."*

The sacramental idea belongs to both the Old and the New Testament dispensations. The name, it is true, is not found in the Bible, but the thing signified is plainly revealed and enjoined. Although not distinguished by any particular title, we have the ordinances pertaining to our holy religion minutely described. *Circumcision* and the *Passover* in the Old Testament dispensation, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* in the New, and whatever these involve and include, are instituted. Their observance in the Church, and by the

\* By Rev. F. W. Conrad, D. D., *Quarterly Review*, 1874, p. 477.

† By Rev. Geo. Diehl, D. D., *Quarterly Review*, 1875, p. 489.

‡ See *Creeds of Christendom* (Schaff), vol. 3, p. 15.



Church, is implied and demanded by the very fact of their divine appointment and preservation.

#### THE EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

The teaching of the early Christian Fathers concerning the sacraments, are neither very definite, nor very satisfactory. With all we find due appreciation of the importance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but not a very clear apprehension of their relation to each other, or to the other rites and ceremonies of our faith.

The word "*Sacrament*" comes into the terminology of Christianity mainly through the Vulgate and other ancient Latin versions of the Bible. It is there used in the translation as the synonym of the Greek *μυστήριον*, including of course many more things than the two sacraments of later times. Its introduction and use may also be traced in part to a classic origin. The Latin word "*Sacramentum*" was used to designate the sum of money deposited with the high priest, or legal functionary, before the commencement of a suit at law, and which was forfeited for public uses by the defeated party. It was also employed to signify an oath, such as that by which the soldier bound himself to fidelity to his commander and his country.

Even Pagan usages may have contributed to the employment of some special designation for the rites and ceremonies of Christianity. Their priests, in order to enhance their importance in the eyes of the multitude, were accustomed to celebrate their sacred rites in secret, and to call them *mysteries*. The early Christian Fathers\* sought similar results by performing Baptism and the Lord's Supper privately, from which all were excluded but the initiated, and hence the title mysteries or sacraments.

We may not be able to say with certainty why this term was selected and appropriated to this special service, or why this special and limited signification was given to it, but of the fact there remains no doubt. Its continuance in this usage for so many centuries, identifies it forever with the sacred ordinances of Christianity.

With the earliest patristic writers, the use of this term was not as limited as it has since become.

*Tertullian*† was confessedly the most influential among the Fathers

\* See Dr. E. Pond's Christian Theology, pp. 670, 671.

† Hagenbach's Hist. of Doctrines, Vol. I. p. 212.

in the matter of terminology. To him may be traced the introduction of the phrases so long in use, *Novum Testamentum*, *Trinitas*, *Peccatum Originale*, *Satisfactio*, etc. With him begins the use of *Sacramentum* in this connection. He speaks of *sacramentum baptismatis et eucharistiæ*, and *sacramentum aquæ et eucharistiæ*, whilst he also uses it in a more general sense, speaking even of the Christian religion as a sacrament.

*Cyprian*, who comes next in order of time, does not seem to observe any exclusive terminology. He applies this word indiscriminately to the Lord's Supper, to the Trinity, and the Lord's prayer. Thus it appears that whatever implied a high religious idea, as well as the more profound doctrines of the Church, were spoken of as sacraments without any acknowledged recognition of a systematic definition.

In the day and under the influence of *Augustine*, who, if not the most learned, is ever regarded as the greatest of the Christian Fathers, the idea of the sacraments was much more clearly apprehended and defined. Without speaking of their number, he designates them as *the visible word*, and unfolded the mysterious union of the word with the external element. When honestly and logically applied we believe the definitions of Augustine\* will leave none but those now included by Protestants in the number of the sacraments, yet even he at times uses the word in a more general sense, embracing matrimony, holy orders, exorcism, *i. e.*, the renunciation of the devil at Baptism, and other sacred ceremonies.

#### THE SCHOLASTICS.

Among the Scholastics the Sacraments had special interest and significance. Accepting the terminology of Tertullian, and the definition of Augustine, they attempted to formulate their views more definitely and systematically.

Special attention was given to *the number*† of the Sacraments. There seems to be no rule or standard for a satisfactory determination of this difficult question, which was intensified by their

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\* *Sacramentum est sacra rei signum; Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum.*

See Hagenbach's *Hist. of Doctrines*, Vol. II., p. 76.

† See Dr. Van Osterzee, Vol. II., p. 741.

See Dr. Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, Vol. III., p. 495.

divergent views and definitions until the happy thought occurred to Peter Lombard that as seven was the sacred number, there must needs be seven sacraments. Rabanus Maurus advocated four, Dionysius Areopagiticus demanded six, whilst Peter Damiani would be content with nothing short of twelve, the apostolic number. The scholastic acuteness and determined zeal of Peter Lombard, however, prevailed, and his view was endorsed and approved, first by the Council of Florence, 1439, and then of Trent, 1547, and continues unto this day as the accepted number, held and proclaimed by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The views of Hugo of St. Victor deserve a passing notice. He divided the sacraments into three classes; first, those pertaining to salvation, viz: baptism, confirmation, and the Lord's Supper; secondly, those pertaining to sanctification, viz: the use of holy water, sprinkling with ashes, etc.; thirdly, those pertaining to preparation for utilizing the others, such as holy orders, the consecration of robes of the clergy, and others.

Before leaving this interesting and fruitful chapter of the writings of the ante-Reformation period, we cite the speculations of the well-known Bonaventura. Accepting the number seven as the true one, he brought them severally into connection with the seven diseases of man. *Original sin* is counteracted by *Baptism*, *mortal sin* by *penance*, *venial sin* by *extreme unction*, *ignorance* is cured by *ordination*, *malice* by the *Lord's Supper*, *infirmity* by *confirmation*, and *evil concupiscence* by *matrimony*. The criticism of Schleiermacher upon this representation is no less just than humorous: "The poor laity have no sacrament for ignorance, nor have the poor clergy a sacrament to counteract lusts." The fertile brain of this ecclesiastic soon discovered an intimate connection between the seven sacraments and the seven cardinal virtues of humanity; thus *Baptism* leads to *faith*, *confirmation* to *hope*, the *Lord's Supper* to *love*, *penance* to *righteousness*, *extreme unction* to *perseverance*, *ordination* to *wisdom*, *matrimony* to *moderation*.

Thomas Aquinas finds the analogy between the natural and spiritual life of man, both recognized and provided for in the existence of the seven sacraments. Thus man is born, then strengthened, then nourished, furnished with means of recovery from illness, with means to propagate his race, to live under the guidance of legitimate authority, and to be prepared for his departure from this world.

The exact counterpart for all this he finds in his spiritual nature, and for all these necessities and emergencies the sacraments make full provision. Man is born spiritually in baptism, strengthened by confirmation, nourished by the Lord's Supper, recovered from spiritual malady by penance, the Church is continued by holy matrimony, a supernatural guide is found in the sacrament of orders, whilst extreme unction completes the equipment for death.

Such is a mere glance at the gradual development of the sacramental idea, which is manifestly ecclesiastical rather than biblical in its nature. As far as it is in perfect accord with the teachings of the word of God, it is or should be accepted by Christians ; but as it is now enunciated, it is not *formally* found therein.

#### THE REFORMERS.

We are thus prepared the better to appreciate the complex difficulties which attended the work of the Reformers, and the more to admire the discernment, wisdom and fidelity they displayed in its accomplishment.

As in the day of Christ, the truth of the Old Testament had been obscured and almost buried beneath the additions and traditions of the scribes and elders, so in the day of the Reformation, the truth of the Gospel was in like manner sadly disfigured and distorted by the inventions and the speculations of the schoolmen, the mystics and the ecclesiastics, and could scarcely be any longer recognized as the word of Christ and of His apostles.

To bring order out of this chaos, to eliminate the simple truth out of its intricate enfoldings, to sift and to separate the divine from the human in the current teachings of the Church, was the duty and the danger of the hour. To it the framers and expounders of the Augsburg Confession were called and committed, and in it they achieved a success as marvelous as it has been enduring. Inferior to the first apostles only in the particular of personal intercourse with Christ, and of direct inspiration, they have witnessed such a good Confession, that to this day we thankfully believe it and proudly teach it.

The Article under consideration is itself the best and most satisfactory exhibit of the views of the Reformers upon the subject of which it treats.

So happily conceived and accurately stated is it, that it has been



the easily recognized basis of every subsequent Protestant Confession, as it has been bodily\* transferred and almost literally incorporated as Article XXV. of the Articles of Religion of the Church of England.

In a few exceptional cases only,† as in the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, and then not absolutely but figuratively, as is affirmed and maintained by the learned and ingenuous Dr. Leonard Hutter, do any of the Confessional writings or acknowledged leaders of the Reformation speak of more than two sacraments. Baptism and the Lord's Supper alone meet all the requirements thereof. Other rites and ceremonies of the Church, which may be very appropriate in themselves, and very helpful to believers, may also in some particulars partake of a sacramental character, and may in many respects resemble a true sacrament, yet do not complete the entire representation, so as to justify their permanent enrollment as of divine appointment.

At the time of the preparation of the Augsburg Confession and the enunciation of the faith of what has since grown into the well-defined system of Protestantism, two fearful evils concerning the sacraments were possible; two terrible extremes, alike dangerous, were imminent. The avoidance of the one greatly endangered the encountering of the other. Many a precious bark, in fleeing Scylla, has been wrecked upon Charybdis. May we not devoutly recognize and acknowledge God's hand in the guidance of the Gospel crew, by which they escaped both, and, as we firmly believe, rescued the Church from the errors and evils of materialistic exaggeration on the one hand, as seen in the *ex opere operato* fallacy of the Papacy, and its effeminate offspring usually denominated High

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\* See Dr. Morris' Art. in the Phila. Luth. Diet, 1877, pp. 15-26.

† *Melanchthon* at first questioned the propriety of using a word not found in the Bible to designate the sacred institutions of the Church: vide *Loci Communes*, 1521 (Cor. Ref. ed. Bretschneider, p. 210). According to *Thiérsh*, II., p. 206, he would have allowed ordination and marriage to be sacraments, as he actually admitted absolution in the Apology: "*absolutio proprie dici protest sacramentum.*" In the *Loci Com.*, 1521 (Cor. Ref., p. 211), however, he says, "*Duo sunt autem signa a Christo in Evangelio instituta; baptismus et participatio mensæ Domini.*"

*Luther* speaks of Baptismus, Pœnitentia, Panis, as sacraments, in his work *De Captiv. Babyl.*, whilst in his *Catech. Major*, penance is included in baptism. See *Hagenbach*, Vol. II., 303.



Churchism, and of rationalistic ignoring, on the other, by which all meaning and efficiency are lost, as seen in the mere outward ceremony theory of Socinianism, and its natural concomitant usually designated Zwinglianism.

Safely and grandly between these did they direct their course, bringing out, in the clearest light, the nature, necessity, design, and significance of these divine institutions.

In endeavoring to arrive at a clear and definite view of the teachings of the Reformers and the Symbols upon this question, we are at the same time attaining acquaintance with the views of the ablest theologians of all subsequent times. Their masterly efforts and scriptural statements have well nigh exhausted the field of inquiry, and leave but little for us to accomplish, except to verify and emphasize their statements.

Such was the providential disposition of the Christian world, political and religious, in that day, that the whole energy of human thought, the whole power of human learning, and the whole strength of human faith, and love, and party attachment, were given to the study and the defence of the doctrines of the Gospel. It was a single and an absorbing pursuit. The results attained demonstrate the thoroughness and the fidelity of the labor performed.

It is very manifest that neither the Old nor the New Testament Scriptures furnish any formal definition of a Sacrament; nor do the writings of the Greek Apologists, or the Latin Fathers, or the schoolmen of the middle ages, present anything that has been regarded as authoritative and final. The conclusions of the Council at Trent have decided the question so far as Romanism is concerned; and though widely and diametrically opposed thereto, evangelical Protestantism has also reached very clear and definite, and, may we not believe, ultimate conclusions.

Beginning with the simple idea of *mystery*, as descriptive of the doctrines and usages of the Redeemer's kingdom, we have next the added thought of obligation incurred by the believer and the participant. Then comes out more definitely the relation between the written word and the instituted ordinance; and then gradually the conception of the Sacraments as a channel, and finally as the only channel, through which God's grace is bestowed upon man. Beyond this it is difficult to conceive to what human ingenuity or ecclesiastical device could have advanced. Divine grace shut up

to the Sacraments; the Sacraments belonging exclusively to the Church; the Church the only depository and guard of the word of God—there can be of course no salvation out of the Church, and there can be no opposition or resistance of the power or decisions of the Church. Having received the efficacious grace signified and conferred by the use of the Sacraments, these need only be continued by the faithful to have it strengthened and increased, or assiduously used by the negligent to have it restored.

It matters very little what we call a Sacrament, if our definition be broad enough to embrace it, and there is nothing in revelation or in history that presents any limit. Nor does it matter how many Sacraments we regard as obligatory, provided only we do not give to all the same authority, nor ascribe to them all the same import and efficacy.\*

In order, however, to reach uniformity of view and practice, and to avoid the risk of teaching such unscriptural exaggerations as were endorsed and promulgated by the Council of Trent, and yet not incur the charge Romanism constantly makes, that we ignore and destroy the sacraments, our theologians have drawn in their writings full and frequent descriptions of their nature, design and efficacy. These are briefly, but yet thoroughly and scientifically stated in the Article of the Augsburg Confession under consideration.

#### THE SYMBOLS.

In systematic theology, the Sacraments belong to the department of *Soteriology*. They logically and necessarily follow "the word of God," in the enumeration of the means of grace and of salvation. The initial operation of the Holy Ghost upon the heart and con-

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\* Apol. Conf. Art. VII. "With respect, however, to the *seven* sacraments, we find that the fathers differed, consequently these seven ceremonies are not *equally* necessary.

"If we regard as sacraments the external signs and ceremonies which God enjoined and with which he connected the promise of grace, it is easy to determine what are sacraments; for ceremonies and other external things instituted by men are not sacraments in this sense, because men cannot promise the grace of God without divine authority. Signs, therefore, which are instituted without the command of God, are not signs of grace, although they may be memorials to children and to the ignorant, like a painted cross.

"But no intelligent man will lay great stress upon the number of sacraments, whether seven or more; *provided only that the word and command of God be maintained.*"

science of man is through the word. When not opposed and resisted by the will of man, the truth of God produces its appointed and legitimate results: "it has an active, supernatural and truly divine power of producing supernatural effects; in other words, of converting, regenerating, and renewing the minds of men."\* This power, transcending beyond comparison all that may be predicated of the convincing force of the highest human oratory, is due solely and entirely to the presence and efficacy of the Holy Spirit in the word. In the economy of redemption and the application of the means of grace, the word and the Spirit are always associated.

By this provision the way is opened for imparting grace to man; but the faith wrought by *the preached word* must be strengthened and confirmed, for which there has been appointed in the Church *the visible word*, in the form of divinely instituted rites or ceremonies, now named Sacraments, through which, by means of external visible signs, this saving grace is secured to man, or if already possessed, is reassured to him.

*Chemnitz*, Ex. Tr. Con., says: "God does not impart His grace in this life all at once, so that it is straightway absolute and finished, so that God has nothing more to confer, man nothing more to receive; but God is always giving and man is always receiving, so as ever to be more closely and perfectly joined to Christ, to hold more and more firmly the pardon of sins; so that the benefits of redemption, which have been begun in us, may be preserved, strengthened, and increased."

This we regard as the true import and interpretation of the teaching of the Augsburg Confession, and of the Apology, concerning the use of the Sacraments, which is also reiterated and reaffirmed with unexampled uniformity of view, by the long line of able and learned divines who have been revered and trusted in our Church as expounders of the word of God, and "of the faith of our Church founded upon that word."

The views of Luther, Melancthon, and the other theologians at Wittenberg, prior to the Diet in 1530, may be regarded as authoritatively and accurately set forth in the Augsburg Confession, which received their united and unqualified approval and endorsement. Therein they utter no uncertain sound. They were distinctly un-

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\* See Schmid's Doct. Theol. Luth. Church, p. 517.

derstood, as they designed they should be, not only by the great body of the theologians of the papal hierarchy, but also by those violent errorists, the Anabaptists, and such enthusiasts as Andrew Bodenstein, familiarly known as Carlstadt, the place of his birth, and Zwinglius and Ecolampadius, and the like.

In the first paragraph of the seventh article of the Apology, it is stated: "Our adversaries admit our assertion in the thirteenth article, that Sacraments are not mere signs, by which men recognize each other, like the countersign, court-livery, &c., but efficacious signs and sure testimonies of God's grace and purposes towards us, by which He admonishes and strengthens our hearts to believe the more firmly and joyfully." In a subsequent paragraph of this same article, we have this additional testimony: "We cannot, however, too carefully consider, or speak too freely of the abuses and errors introduced by the pernicious, shameful and impious doctrine of the *opus operatum*, namely, that the mere use of the Sacraments, the work performed, makes us just before God, and secures His grace, even without a good disposition of the heart. Hence originated the unspeakable and abominable abuse of the mass. They cannot show a particle of truth from the writings of the ancient Fathers to support the opinions of the Scholastics. Nay, Augustine says, directly to the contrary, that it is not the Sacraments that justify, but *faith* in their use justifies us in the sight of God." From this noble utterance, alike evangelical, scriptural and Lutheran, no genuine Protestant can logically dissent. Of it we may quote the hearty endorsement of many names widely and most favorably known and honored for their piety, ability, and learning.

#### ENDORSEMENT OF THE SYMBOLS.

From Martin Chemnitz, "the greatest pupil of Melanchthon, and the prince among the Lutheran divines of his age," one of the most famous of the learned Professors at Wittenberg, who was already in the promise of early manhood when Luther died, and who had attained the maturity of his powers when Melanchthon was called to his reward, and who with Andreæ and Selnecker formed the theological triumvirate who more than all others gave shape, and form, and point to the Formula of Concord, we make the following extract:\*

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\* Ex Trie., II., 35.



"God, in those things which pertain to our salvation, is pleased to treat with us through certain means; he himself has ordained this use of them, and instituted the word of gospel promise, which sometimes is proposed to us *by itself or nakedly*, and sometimes *clothed or made visible* by certain rites or sacraments appointed by him."

From the equally learned and distinguished teacher and author who followed Chemnitz as Professor at Wittenberg, the voluminous Dr. Leonard Hutter, we offer the following: \*

"A Sacrament is a sacred rite divinely instituted, consisting partly of an external element or sign, and partly of a celestial object, by which God not only seals the promise of grace peculiar to the Gospel (*i. e.* of gratuitous reconciliation,) but also truly presents through the external elements, to the individuals using the Sacrament, the celestial blessings promised in the institution of each of them, and also savingly applies the same to those who believe."

Dr. John Gerhard, the pupil of Hutter, who has been often called the most eminent of Lutheran theologians, and of whom the venerable Dr. Tholuck said: "He was the most learned, and with the learned, the most beloved, among the heroes of Lutheran Orthodoxy,"† writes the following (VIII., 328): "A Sacrament is a sacred and solemn rite, divinely instituted, by which God, through the ministry of man, dispenses heavenly gifts, under a visible and external element, through a certain word, in order to offer, apply and seal to those using them *and believing*, the special promise of the Gospel concerning the gratuitous remission of sins."

"Two things are absolutely requisite to constitute a sacrament, properly so called, viz., the word and the element, according to the well-known saying of Augustine: 'The word is added to the element and it becomes a sacrament.' This assertion is based upon the very nature and aim of the sacraments since the sacraments are intended to present to the senses in the garb of an external element, that same thing that is preached in the gospel message, from which it readily follows that neither the word without the element, nor the element without the word, constitutes the sacrament. By the word is understood first, the command and divine institution through which the element, because thus appointed by God, is separated from a

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\*Comp. Loc. Th., 221, 214.

†See Dr. J. A. Seiss' "Digest of Christian Doctrine," Introduction.



common use and set apart for a sacramental use; and, secondly, the promise peculiar to the Gospel to be applied and sealed by the sacrament. By the element is meant not any arbitrarily chosen element, but that which has been fixed and mentioned in the words of the institution."

John Andrew Quenstedt, D. D., another of the truly distinguished professors of Wittenberg, writes thus: "God has added to the word of the Gospel, as another communicative means of salvation, the sacraments which constitute the visible word."

That we may not burden this discussion with excessive quotation, we omit many others of similar import and authority. The citations already adduced serve the double purpose of showing what interpretation was put upon the Confession and its Apology on this subject, and of the striking agreement, in all essential particulars, between these several witnesses.

Theology, it has been said, is not a progressive science. This is true of this doctrine. There was advance in the interpretation and representation of it until it was brought to conform in all particulars with the revealed teachings of God's word; but when once clearly expressed in the happy terms of the Confession, it has remained unchanged unto this day, and will, we may confidently believe, continue in this form until the means of grace shall happily no longer be needed.

In the light which this discussion thus far has brought to the understanding of this important and interesting Article of our Confession, we may venture to examine in detail its several declarations.

#### THE SACRAMENTS AS EXTERNAL SIGNS.

*"Concerning the use of the sacraments, our churches teach that they were instituted not only as marks of a (Christian) profession among men, . . ."*

If "*not only*" (non modo) for this purpose, yet manifestly, *along with this purpose*, for something beyond. The purpose for which they were instituted was not limited to this one design.

We accept then the sacraments as "marks of a profession among men," as pertaining to the visibility of the Church, and as such both valuable and indispensable. We have only to consider the necessities of our complex nature, of reason and sense, of body and soul, to be convinced of the wisdom and the propriety of a set of

external rites and ceremonies in our system of religion. There must be arrangement and provision for the whole nature of man, for the exercise of all his faculties and powers, so that through his bodily senses, his spiritual emotions may be aroused and sustained.

Under the Abrahamic covenant, a proselyte could only be admitted to the immunities of citizenship in the commonwealth of Israel by submitting to the rite of circumcision; in like manner, participation in the Christian sacraments is a public declaration of faith in Christ. They are, therefore, "badges of Christian men's profession."

Our blessed Saviour did not confine himself in his instructions to the mere utterance of the word, the simple declaration of the truth, but ever accompanied it with some striking illustration, pressing into His service whatever nearest at hand presented itself as available. The occupations and occurrences of his hearers, the objects within the vision of those about him, helped to unfold his meaning and quicken their apprehension. A system that has no reference to the bodily constitution of man, may do for angels, but it is not fitted for men, since it ignores one-half their nature.

Quakers\* reject both the name and the idea of a sacrament. According to Barclay, they acknowledge only spiritual Baptism and a mystical Lord's Supper.

The rejection of a name, confessedly not in the Bible, and never enjoined by divine authority, is not a matter of any importance. If those who use it, do so by their own option, the same right remains to those who do not use it to refuse its adoption.

The rejection of an idea, however, which involves the ignoring of positive enactments, the disregard of the word and the example of our blessed Lord and his immediate followers, is immeasurably more serious and responsible.

The authority to spiritualize, and thereby entirely to destroy the commanded ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, implies and demands similar treatment of all of Christ's commanded institutions. *Marriage*, with all its blessed sanctions and restraints, must be rejected; *public worship*, with all its supports and incentives, must be abandoned; the *Sabbath*, with all its healthful and corrective power, must be obliterated; and the *Church*, as an institution of God, must be disbanded.

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\* See Winer's *Confessions of Christendom*, p. 230.

The logic which puts a period to the validity of Christ's commands necessarily terminates the value of his promises. Whilst it excludes external ceremonies from the Church, it destroys the Church itself, leaves believers without the means of mutual recognition and assistance, destroys both opportunity and motive, either to declare or to defend our faith in Christ and our love to God, or to detect and expose, to resist and refute false doctrines and errors. Upon the supposition of the truth and inspiration of the Gospel narratives, in which is contained the record of the appointment, by Christ, of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, with the accompanying commands as to their continuance, we may well demand the reasons for their abrogation. When and by whom was the edict promulgated? By what authentication was it attended? What occurrences or circumstances rendered their future use no longer desirable or necessary?

The value and utility of the Sacraments, in this respect, may be clearly recognized in their influence upon the maintenance and propagation of religion. Thereby children are instructed as to the nature of God's kingdom, and their attachment to it secured. Thereby heathen, heretics and unbelievers are addressed, and may be impressed, when the preached word would be disregarded. Thereby the powerful bond of human friendship and fellowship is introduced, to strengthen the hands of the weak and support the faith of the faint.

The public administration of the Sacraments, pointing back, as they do, with unerring certainty, to the time and the circumstances of their institution by Christ, are an argument in behalf of Christianity, the value of which cannot be overstated. Infidelity must account for their origin, their introduction, their prevalence, and their uninterrupted continuance. Except upon the ground of their appointment by Divine command, their hold upon the mind and heart of our race would not endure beyond a single generation. There is nothing to maintain their irresistible sway among Christians, except their superhuman adaptation to the wants and the necessities of our condition. That adaptation proclaims their high origin and pleads for their preservation and perpetuity.

Their number is sufficient to give form and visibility to the Church of Christ, without being burdensome. They are impressive and suggestive in their influence upon the mind and heart, and

capable of universal application. In all the centuries of their existence, no complaint has yet been preferred by the devout worshiper, that they have lost their freshness or their meaning. True, the highest form of worship is that which is purely spiritual, and to this we are invited, encouraged and urged; but this we cannot hope to reach until, in the resurrection, we shall have undergone that wondrous change, by which our present material bodies shall become *spiritual bodies*. Until then they must needs retain their confessional character, and continue to be used as "marks of profession amongst men."

#### THE SACRAMENTS AS MEANS OF GRACE.

The concluding portion of the paragraph under consideration is in these words: "*but rather as signs and evidences of the will of God towards us, for the purpose of exciting and confirming the faith of those who use them.*"

The former use and purpose they did truly subserve, and were intended to subserve, but that did not exhaust the design of their appointment. According to this statement, they have their most special import and reference to the recipient. They look not only to the visible, external Church, and supply it with needful ceremonies for the reception and recognition of its members, but also to the spiritual wants and necessities of the individual believer, and supply signs and evidences (testimonies of God's disposition towards us). This brings before us the innermost meaning and intent of these sacred and divine institutions. No wonder that the early Church called them "mysteries," for who can fathom them?

We naturally and properly turn to the Apology, as the first authorized and accepted commentary upon the text of the Confession, for explanation of the sense in which its words are used. To the question, how are we to interpret the declaration that the Sacraments are "*signs and evidences of the will of God towards us,*" we have reply: "the Sacraments are not mere signs \* \* \* but efficacious signs and sure testimonies of God's grace and purpose towards us, by which he admonishes and strengthens our hearts to believe the more firmly and joyfully." "The external signs were instituted to move our hearts, namely, both by the word and the external signs, to believe, when we are baptized, and when we receive the Lord's body, that God will be truly merciful to us, through Christ, as Paul,



Rom. x. 17, says: "*Faith cometh by hearing.*" "As the word enters our ears, so the external signs are placed before our eyes, inwardly to excite and move the heart to faith. The word and the external signs work the same thing in our hearts; as Augustine well says: 'the Sacrament is a visible word;' for the external sign is like a picture, and signifies the same thing that is preached by the word; both, therefore, effect the same thing." "The proper use of the Sacraments requires faith, to believe *the divine promises and receive the promised grace which is offered through the Sacraments and the word.*" "The Sacraments are external signs and seals of the promises." "We should firmly believe then that *the grace and remission of sins*, promised in the New Testament, are imparted to us."

These quotations lead to the conclusion that the Confession designs to represent the Sacraments as signs and evidences of God's purpose to pardon sin, to nurture grace, and to bestow salvation. They are signs not of our condition before God, or of our disposition toward God, but of his disposition and of his purposes of grace towards us.

After most carefully and honestly tracing the developments of the views of Luther upon this subject, the learned and reliable Dr. Dorner, of Berlin,\* concludes his representation of the position to which the great reformer was conducted as follows: "The signs, and even the body and blood of Christ, do not give something specially contained in them, which is not to be had otherwise; but they are only the sealing form, the pledge of the gift, by which the substance of the blessing, which lies in the word of promise, even in connection with the Holy Supper, may become the sooner fixed and be the more certain. *But the substance itself is the forgiveness of sins.* The body and blood of Christ are not properly in themselves regarded as the gift which is the object of the Holy Supper, but they are only the means of assurance, divine and holy pledges of the proper gift, namely of *the forgiveness of sins with which life and salvation are connected.* This then is the doctrine to which Luther continued essentially to adhere, and which has become peculiar to the Lutheran Church. The Holy Supper is, according to this form of doctrine, a promise of the forgiveness of sins, confirmed by signs or seals, wherein not merely bread and wine, but even and emphati-

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\* History of Prot. Theol., Vol. I., p. 158.



cally the present body and\* blood of Christ, form the pledge; and this in such a way, that faith receives the same matter both in and outside of the Sacrament, *the forgiveness of sins*, only in the Holy Supper with special external certification by means of the God-given pledge. *To this the Lutheran Confessions adhere.* Apol. 201: Idem effectus est verbi et ritus, after Augustine's language, Sacramentum esse verbum visibile, quia ritus est quasi pictura verbi, idem significans quod verbum, quare idem est utriusque effectus."

From this we anticipate no dissent, as of it we believe no positive denial can be sustained. We may, therefore, proceed to enumerate and describe the things signified and indicated in the two Christian Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

These Sacraments, in their external symbols, are designed to exhibit the blessing of God's covenant, and to shadow forth the benefits of redemption. The one ordinance meets the believer at the very threshold of the Church, and by its simple but significant ceremony, indicates the character which alone fits for worthy membership therein; the other attends him, with its equally appropriate service, throughout his entire pilgrimage, furnishing ever the needed evidence of sustaining grace, and witnessing anew the presence of the risen Lord. The lessons they teach are invaluable, the influence they exert is most blessed.

As Baptism presents its water, it reveals the moral and spiritual filth which demands cleansing, that we may become acceptable to God and fitted for fellowship with him, and already promises the renewing power which attends the added word and accompanying Spirit. What could more aptly point out "*the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost*," which is shed abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour on all who are saved according to his mercy? Was not the same prophetically seen by the prophet of Chebar, when he writes in anticipation of this ordinance and of its high import: "*Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean?*" Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Baptism is therefore justly a sign of spiritual renewal, by which its recipient is fitted for the salvation and entitled to all the benefits of the Covenant, 1 Titus iii. 5.

Neither is the Lord's Supper an unmeaning ceremony. It too has its mode of administration and its necessary emblems. Its consecrated bread and wine most strikingly portray the broken body and the shed blood of the Redeemer. "*The cup of blessing which*

*we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ?* The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ? 1 Cor. x. 16. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. xi. 26. Each new celebration of this ordinance is a most positive and emphatic re-declaration of the chiefest doctrines and revelations of the Christian religion. In its commemoration of the death of its Founder it re-asserts the sin and ruin of our race, making such sacrifice a necessity. It re-echoes the righteous indignation of a holy God against all evil-doers and transgressors. It unfolds the infinite resources of the Almighty in being able to provide a way of reconciling the conflicting demands of judgment and mercy. It sends forth anew the superhuman prayer: "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;*" heard alike on earth and in heaven, which, that it might be answered, forced that other cry, which still makes angels wonder and mortals adore, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" It affords the truest fulfilment of the Saviour's own most gracious words, "*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.*" In that it places in the hand of each participant the appointed emblems, and bids each one, "*take, eat;*" "*drink ye all of this;*" the personal acceptance of every one, who receives it with faith in the promises which are exhibited and set forth, is reassured. In that all who believe and are gathered together in one place are cordially invited to unite in this observance, there is exhibited alike the duty and reality of "*the Communion of Saints,*" true type of that more blessed fellowship which will be eternal and complete in the world to come. In that the design and efficacy of Christ's sacrificial offering in our stead and in our behalf are ever thrust upon the eye, by this visible word, and upon the ear by the spoken word, in this grand sacramental communion, there is uttered to the soul the glad assurance that we are pardoned and saved through grace divine; and in that this festival has been appointed to continue to the end of this dispensation, we, by it, do show forth the Lord's death until he come, and thus keep alive the remembrance and the expectation of his "*appearing the second time without sin unto salvation; to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.*" In a word, the whole gospel history culminates in the transactions commemorated in the Lord's Supper. The great truths of revela-

tion and redemption centre around the cross, and as in these alone we can adequately discover the will of God toward us, Christ has graciously left in his Church this rite, that with its co-ordinate Sacrament of Baptism, it might testify to us of his gracious intentions to bestow his promised blessings and fulfil his covenanted engagements.

Dr. Dorner unfolds the workings of Luther's mind upon this point as follows: "Whilst *the word of God in the Holy Scriptures* is thus established as the means of grace in general, grace assumes in the *Sacraments*, on the other hand, a form having reference still more immediately to the individual person, as living in a specified time and space. It is an expression of Luther's, in reference to this, as frequent as it is singularly descriptive, that God "deals with us" (mit uns handle) through the means of grace."

"It does not satisfy the vital religious need, as it expresses itself in Luther, *to know* of a divine decree of salvation, whether concerning the individual person, or concerning the past, even although eternally valid, work of atonement; but the soul of the pious longs after the living God, and hence requires not merely past history or eternal decrees, but also deeds of love on the part of God, which as it were, renew their youth, the present glance of love and greeting from above."\*

#### TWO-FOLD USE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

But the article under investigation represents the use of the Sacraments as two-fold, designed not only to serve "as signs and evidences of the will of God towards us," but also "*for the purpose of exciting and confirming the faith of those who use them.*"

So admirably conceived and happily adjusted are they, that they accomplish this double office most successfully. They unfold God's grace and favor, by the manifestation of the truth concerning the divine will and covenant, and in response they invite and encourage implicit reliance upon the divine promises. They show the claim of God's word upon us, the security of the foundation upon which our faith is to rest, and the blessed results it will effect.

It is true, "*faith cometh by hearing,*" but the faith so wrought by the preached word needs to be nourished and fed, so as to be pre-

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\* Hist. of Prot. Theology, Vol. I., p. 147.

served, strengthened and perfected, as the Apostles prayed, "*Lord, increase our faith.*"

Faith is a living, vital power, and like every other form of life on earth, is capable of growth, under favorable conditions, and so, also, is subject to injury and destruction by adverse influences, as St. Paul says (1 Tim. i. 19): "*Some concerning faith have made shipwreck.*" The Sacraments are not represented in this Article of the Confession as bestowing or conferring faith in its beginnings, but as stirring up and confirming that which has been already established.

We cannot advance very far, in an examination of the symbols and authors of our Church upon the subject of the Sacraments, before we become convinced that *faith* is made the condition of their true benefit and efficacy. Under the long neglect and perversion of the dark ages, the moral condition of the participant was entirely disregarded, and the full advantages of the Church's ordinances were put unconditionally, *sine bono motu utentis*, at the disposal of the administrator. From this the Reformers dissented in the most positive manner.

As early as the year 1518, Luther declares the leading principle to be: "*Whatever may be the case with the Sacraments, faith must maintain its rights and honors*": \* \* "*that without faith no blessing can come to a man from the Sacrament*:" \* \* "*that the Sacraments do not effect the grace which they signify; not the Sacrament, but faith in it, justifies; it purifies, not because it takes place, but because it is believed (non sacramentum, sed fides sacramenti, justificat; abluit sacramentum non quia fit, sed quia creditur)*;" \* \* "*that faith may also receive, apart from the Sacrament, the same thing as in the Sacrament, namely, the forgiveness of sins (through faith in the word).*"\*

In the Apology (VII., 18,) it is affirmed, "*We teach that faith is necessary to the proper use of the Sacraments; a faith which believes the promises and receives the things promised, which are here offered in the Sacrament. And the reason of this is plain and undeniable. A promise is useless to us, unless it is embraced by faith. But the Sacraments are signs of the promises, therefore faith is necessary to their proper use.*"

In perfect harmony with this representation are the views of the

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\* See Dorner, Vol. I., 151.



leading Lutheran theologians unto the present day. Out of the many at hand, we cite but a few. *Chemnitz* (Ex. C. Trid., II. 36): "The instrumental cause in this doctrine is two-fold; one is, as it were, the hand of God, by which, through the word and Sacraments, He offers, presents, applies, and seals the benefits of redemption to believers. The other is, as it were, our hand, by which we *in faith* ask, apprehend and receive those things which God offers to us through the word and Sacraments. The efficacy of the Sacraments is not such as though through them God infused, and as it were, impressed grace and salvation, even on unbelievers or believers." *Hollazius* (1061): "*Faith is necessarily required in order to the reception of the salutary efficacy of the Sacrament.*" "The Sacraments confer no grace on adults, unless when offered they receive it by true *faith, which existed in their hearts previously.*"

Nor need we wonder that such prominence and emphasis are given to the matter of *faith* in its relations to the Sacraments, or that this Article concludes with a condemnation of the opposite theory:

*"They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify (ex opere operato) by the mere performance of the act, and who do not teach that faith which believes our sins to be forgiven, is required in the use of the Sacraments."*

#### PROTESTANTISM VERSUS ROMANISM.

A very little reflection will, we believe, make it manifest that the gist of the controversy between Protestantism and Romanism centres in this point.

Its interpretation decides the question of the way of salvation. It cannot be denied that two opposite theories are held, and that they are conflicting, antagonistic, irreconcilable, and mutually destructive of each other. There is no one point where they approximate so closely as to merge imperceptibly into one another. Narrowness, shallowness, ignorance, and blind partisan zeal have often, must we not say always, deceived and misled the unthinking so as to cause them to lift into undue prominence matters comparatively unimportant, and to display embittered hostility over questions of taste, of modes, of measures, or of men. True, everything pertaining to religion is important, but everything is not equally religious or equally important. But neither skill, nor conciliation, nor cordi-



ality, nor charity, nor expediency, nor explanation, nor admission, nor silence, nor all these combined, can bridge the chasm between that familiarly known as the *ex opere operato* theory, and that of Faith, as taught in the Augsburg Confession and held in the Church of the Augsburg Confession, and in the Reformed Church at large. It is not a question of degrees, or of probabilities, or of preferences, or of historical development, but of scriptural representation, of theological dogma, of divine truth. Are we saved by faith through grace, or are we saved by the Sacraments through the Church? Or, as it is sometimes stated, do we come to Christ through the Church, or do we come to the Church through Christ? We claim that this presentation is neither fanciful nor unfair; and if some object who hold the theory, but who do not like either the name or the organization of the papal hierarchy, we can only add that by adopting the doctrinal tenets and the sacramental theory of Rome, they have already obliterated all distinctive peculiarities, and are now separated from her only in name.

The blessed Saviour saw fit to defer the institution of the Sacraments until he had reached the very close of his earthly ministry. We cannot regard this as unintentional or circumstantial. Had they been necessary to the attainment of faith, or more important and influential than the spoken word, he would have placed them at the very beginning of his work, and thus have afforded his disciples the full benefits they would have conferred. The only means of grace they had, apart from the sacrificial observances of Judaism, was that of the word, and this was deemed enough.

In Protestant theology, *the word* assumes, and must ever maintain the first place in enumerating the means of grace. It stands before the Sacraments, not in the order of importance or of intrinsic value, as though one were to be balanced against the other, for they cannot thus be rightly compared or contrasted; but in the order of time, for the word was *first* spoken, and is ever the first in its agency in building up the believer in a life of true godliness. The word proclaims Christ as "*the way, the truth, and the life.*" The Holy Spirit ever attends and accompanies its declaration, and if we may so speak, the sacramental grace of the preached word leads to faith, saving faith, not a mere historic belief, but that faith which follows

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\* See Church and Christ, Litton, 159.

repentance and precedes salvation. Then and there are the place, and the value, and the efficacy of the Sacraments to be recognized and acknowledged. Rome,\* in *contrast* with the Bible, elevates the Sacraments above the word in her estimate of the means of grace; the Greek Church, in *conflict* with it, hardly regards the word as a means of grace; whilst in the Scriptures it is to the word that most frequent reference is made when speaking of the agency by which man's salvation is secured. The Sacraments demand for their proper and profitable reception suited and adequate spiritual preparation, as they claim and proclaim corresponding fitness and attainment in all their participants. But how shall this be secured, if faith be not made to precede? "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Nothing can be clearer than that in every case of adult admission to the initiative rite of Baptism, as recorded in the New Testament, repentance and faith are either declared or implied. The word, received by faith and applied by the Holy Spirit, is the only true preparation for the reception of the blessings belonging to the Sacraments. These blessings are not to be regarded as consisting in mere external relations secured by our connection with the Church, and because of which God's favor is to be enjoyed, but they are to be found in a new heart and a right life, delivered from the power and service of evil and consecrated unto God. These can only be secured through personal union with Christ, through faith in his name. Mere participation in the Sacraments without faith, *i. e.*, without the character and life which faith works in us, will not avail for our growth in grace (for that cannot grow which has not yet been born), nor for our acceptance and salvation.

The theory condemned in the Confession practically and virtually teaches the very reverse of this. With it, the Church consists of all, irrespective of moral or religious character, renewed or unrenewed, who are in external formal connection with it; and that the blessings of union with Christ, with all that belongs thereto, and flows therefrom, are assured and secured through the sole agency of the Sacraments, and that access to Christ is obtained through the intervening agency of the Church.

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\* See Van Oosterzee, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II., 740.

Even where Romanism admits the need of personal holiness to the attainment of salvation, it looks for, as is done by Bellarmine, in his discussions on the Sacraments, the renewing and sanctifying of the soul, not to the word and the Spirit, but to the Church and the Sacraments.\* It regards the Church as a visible institution, with complete apparatus and machinery for saving souls. It meets all alike with the offer and the requirement of *Baptism*, by which it not only professes and promises to secure union with Christ, but also to provide and bestow sacramental grace, *i. e.* spiritual power and life to discharge subsequent duty. It then presents the Sacrament of *Confirmation*, by which it fully equips for the spiritual warfare upon which the recipient enters. The *Eucharist* is then reached with its declared *ex opere operato* efficacy, feeding and nourishing with Christ's body and blood all who interpose no positive bar (*non ponentibus obicem*). For those who have fallen, there is in readiness the very convenient sacrament of *Penance*, whose restoring virtue never fails in the hour of need. Thus is there provision for every emergency of life, and so is there also for death. The Sacrament of *Extreme Unction* places in his hand a passport to the eternal world, issued by the order and with the seal of the Church upon it. But eternal life is not yet bestowed. Confessing that this *ex opere operato* theory does not necessarily work moral changes or necessarily secure oneness with Christ and fitness for heaven, there is placed, somewhere between the grave and glory, the Sacrament of *Purgatory* for completing and perfecting the preparation of the soul for its final and unchanging condition.

There is in this arrangement, most surely, the merit of completeness. Should it ever fail in achieving its professed object, it cannot be for want of instrumentality.

#### COUNCIL OF TRENT ON THE SACRAMENTS.

At the seventh session of the Council of Trent, held March 3, A. D. 1547, action was taken upon the subject of "*The Sacraments in general*." Thirteen Canons were passed, as set forth in the preface, "in order to destroy the errors and to extirpate the heresies which have appeared in these our days on the subject of the said most holy Sacraments, as well those which have been revived from

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\* See Hodge's Systematic Theology, Vol. III., 511.

the heresies condemned of old by our fathers, as also those newly invented, and which are exceedingly prejudicial to the purity of the Catholic Church and to the salvation of souls."

In the first of these it is "established and decreed" that the Sacraments were instituted by Christ, that they are neither more nor less than seven, and an anathema is discharged at any one who may be so daring and wicked as to declare "that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a Sacrament." Was not that *cannon* most effectually spiked by Chemnitz in his illustrious *Examen*? It has harmed no Protestant theologian since then.

Anathemas, like cannon balls in a citadel, were provided in great abundance, and with the adoption of each successive *Canon*, one was hurled at the head of any unbelieving dissenter.

*Canon II.* sets forth the difference between the Sacraments of the Old and New Testaments.

*Canon III.* declares that these seven Sacraments are not all of equal value.

*Canon IV.* affirms that these Sacraments are necessary unto salvation; that the grace of justification cannot be obtained without them, although all the Sacraments are not necessary for every individual.

*Canon V.* anathematizes any one who may say that these Sacraments were instituted for the sake of nourishing faith alone.

*Canon VI.* reads as follows: "If any one saith that the Sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify; or, that they do not confer that grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto; as though they were merely outward signs of grace or justice received through faith, and certain marks of the Christian profession, whereby believers are distinguished amongst men from unbelievers: let him be anathema."

*Canon VII.* is distinctive: "If any saith that grace, as far as God's part is concerned, is not given through the said Sacraments, always and to all men, even though they receive them rightly, but (only) sometimes and to some persons: let him be anathema."

*Canon VIII.* is also worthy of quotation: "If any one saith that by the said Sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred through the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices for the obtaining of grace: let him be anathema."

*Canon IX.* asserts that Baptism, Confirmation and Orders imprint



upon the soul certain indelible signs, on account of which they cannot be repeated.

*Canon X.* affirms that all Christians have not power to administer the word and the Sacraments.

*Canon XI.* declares that when ministers effect and confer the Sacraments, the intention of doing what the Church does is required.

*Canon XII.* teaches that though a minister be in mortal sin, yet if he observe all the essentials which belong to the effecting or conferring of the Sacrament, he effects and confers the Sacrament.

*Canon XIII.* says that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, used in the administration of the Sacraments, may not be contemned, or omitted, or changed, without sin.

A more interesting, important, or timely study, than that which these thirteen Canons invite and demand, enters not into a theological course, nor arises in the longest pastorate. Conflicting opinions and theories have prevailed, and no doubt will prevail so long as Sacraments exist. The Church ever has observed and doubtless ever will observe these external ordinances. The questions of grace and salvation stand in closest connection therewith. Indifference, either for theologians or pastors, is impossible. Through them the faith and the life of Christians are expressed. There is possibility, if not danger, for censurable and destructive extremes, as the charges and denunciations of each age and tendency make apparent. Let there be too objective and materialistic a conception entertained, reducing the appliances of the Church to the low position of being a mere religious machinery, working its results necessarily and by the mere act performed, severing the appointed connection between morality and religion, there will be outcry loud and long, and they who persist therein must do so against the most earnest protest, and the most cogent reasoning, of an alarmed and indignant Church. Should there be, on the other hand, too violent a rebound, should there be too low a value placed upon the existing and established rites of the Church, should they be shorn of all their credited efficiency, and be regarded simply as suggestive ceremonies, by which to make out and distinguish Christians and stimulate their spiritual sensibilities, as the rainbow in the heavens, or the memorial stones of the Jordan, or the pictures in our churches, there will again be most righteous indignation provoked, and believers will demand the respect and appreciation due to institutions of this high character.



Against both these false and dangerous positions has the Church of the Augsburg Confession been compelled to bear witness. Guided alone by the sure and infallible word of God, it has taken its position advisedly and firmly, protesting alike against Rome and Rationalism, against excluding Christ from his own Church by the substitution of Sacraments \*multiplied at will, and the distorted interpretation or unbelieving neglect of his solemn commands and appointments.

Stimulated by the zeal, ability and achievements of the Reformers, and, as is most likely, with \* the original (German) copy of the Augsburg Confession before them for examination and refutation, the enraged and indignant Doctors and theologians at Trent formulated their conclusions in the Canons just recited. Therein they clearly declare and maintain that the Sacraments contain the grace which they signify; that they confer grace *ex opere operato*, by the mere act, upon such as do not put an obstruction by mortal sin; that the Sacraments are equally efficacious in accomplishing their designed end—"for these sensible and natural things," it is declared, "work by the almighty power of God in the Sacraments what they could not do by their own power;" that faith in the recipient in order to his experiencing the efficacy of the Sacraments is not necessary; that all that is necessary in the administrator is the intention of doing what the Church designs to be done.

#### EX OPERE OPERATO.

Much has grown out of the declaration that the Sacraments have an *ex opere operato* efficacy, for much is contained therein. Romanists and Protestants have explained and expounded until what in itself is plain enough and easily understood, has become much obscured. There need be no difficulty, however, in arriving at a positive understanding. There is here propounded and affirmed what had been so relentlessly condemned in the thirteenth Article of the Augsburg Confession. Over against that Article they design, and make clear their design, to say that the Sacraments when duly administered invariably produce the intended results, irrespective of the moral character of the recipient. They are sufficient in themselves, and we need not look beyond them for the effect produced.

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\* Creeds of Christendom, Vol. I., p. 237.

It would be an easy task to bring together the masterly utterances of Lutheran and Reformed theologians in reply to this assumption. We will not lengthen this article by such quotations, however interesting and valuable they might prove. The line of argumentation we will briefly indicate. Not only is it affirmed that it lacks authority from the sacred scriptures, which is in itself an indispensable requisite and a most damaging defect, but that it is absolutely unscriptural, being in conflict with the Bible in its representation of saving grace, as dependent upon a Sacrament and not upon faith.

Then again it is urged against this theory, that it debases the ordinances of divine appointment, intended to influence the mind and control the affections, into a mere physical law, with no other recommendation than that it will unfailingly operate as a magical charm. The Sacraments are thus degraded to the level of heathen ignorance and superstition. It is also affirmed of this priestly device, that it is of immoral tendency, as nothing short of mortal sin can constitute a sufficient bar against the reception of the grace signified and conveyed by the Sacraments.

Another most serious and immovable objection is found in the fact, that whatever may be the design or the desire, the need or the qualifications of the recipient, it conditions the efficacy and the blessings of the Sacraments, entirely upon the intention of the administrators. For reasons like these we reject and repudiate this whole conception as alike unscriptural, unreasonable, unnatural, and unsatisfactory.

#### LATER DOGMATIC VIEWS.

The requirements of this occasion impose the obligation, not simply to use the Article under examination as a text for an isolated discourse, as the homiletician employs a passage of scripture, but in addition, under its lead, to trace the influence it has had in forming and controlling the theology of the Church in subsequent times. We may, in some sense, regard the Augsburg Confession as a germ, which, endowed with spiritual vitality, must continually increase and grow until it has reached its utmost dimensions. It was indeed an imperishable and indestructible bud, which has opened and expanded into a most beautiful and fragrant flower. Yet it must ever be regarded as the work of uninspired and fallible men, who themselves acknowledge no human authority as final, and who are most

honored, not when their utterances are credulously accepted, but when they are thoroughly examined and diligently compared with the word of God. To this their successors and followers are ever urged, not only by their example, but also by their precept.

The history of Dogmatics in the Lutheran Church, reveals the existence of a difference in the mode of stating the efficacy of the Sacraments. There may not be in it as much as at first appears, but unquestionably the representations of our later theologians must be regarded not only as fuller, but as stronger. Dr. Heinrich Schmid, of Erlangen, in his admirable and indispensable work, "*The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*," presents the matter at considerable length, and with fairness and discrimination. "When we compare the views of the earlier dogmaticians with those of the more modern, we find their difference to consist in this, that the earlier dogmaticians are solely concerned to prove the analogy of the word and Sacraments, as the two means of salvation, according to which in the one case, evangelical grace is communicated by the word, and in the other by the external, visible sign. In this view, however, there is no notice taken of the fact, that above all in the Lord's Supper, besides grace, there is something in addition present and communicated, viz., the body and blood of Christ. The later theologians, on the other hand, keep this particularly in view, that even if by the Sacraments, as well as by the word, the grace of salvation (*i. e.* conversion, justification, regeneration, etc.) is conferred, yet that this grace is not the first and proximate object conferred in the Sacraments, as it is in the word, but that in the Sacraments there is something else which precedes it, (in the Lord's Supper, body and blood), the design of which is to impart saving grace. It is this, then, that they mean to convey by the general expression, *materia cœlestis*, applicable to both Sacraments, but it is difficult for them to show the *materia cœlestis* in Baptism, in the same way as in the Lord's Supper. And in this view of the subject, the force of the analogy also between a Sacrament and the word, as the two means of salvation, is weakened. In assuming a *materia cœlestis*, they assumed also a particular union of the *materia cœlestis et terrestis*."

The manner of this union is stated by Quenstedt (IV., 75) as follows: "As a Sacrament is composed of a terrestrial and a celestial object, there must necessarily be a certain union and *κοινωνία* which

we properly call sacramental. For that union is neither essential, nor natural, nor accidental, but in view of the *materia unita*, it is extraordinary; in regard to the design it is sacramental. Therefore one does not exist without the other; for instance, water without the Spirit, nor the Spirit without the water, because these too are most intimately united in the sacramental act, nor can one be a Sacrament without the other."

This method of stating the doctrine seems to have been induced by the views held with regard to the Lord's Supper, as in that Sacrament, especially, is it satisfactorily verified and illustrated. Much diversity of opinion and statement prevailed as to what constitutes the celestial material in Baptism.

The most prominent and able opponent of this assumption was found in the vigorous and indefatigable Dr. Baier, "who contended that the expression, celestial material, should be entirely ignored in the doctrine of the Sacraments in general, and we should adhere to the simple doctrine of the earlier dogmaticians, who do not mention it at all." It seems to have maintained its hold upon the great body of Lutheran divines, as is manifest among others from the statements of Guericke, who regards the correct view of the efficacy of the Sacraments to lie nearer that of the Greek and Roman representation, than that which is found in the Reformed theology. If Guericke be right in this supposition, so much the worse for the Reformed theology. Neither Guericke, strenuous Lutheran as he is, nor any other Lutheran, can be deterred from holding or defending the accredited doctrines of the Church, provided they be first ascertained to be the teachings of the sacred Scriptures, or clear and necessary deductions therefrom, by any suspicion or charge of thereby approximating Romanism. The *truth* is more valuable than reputation or presumed consistency.

So long however, as it remains an undenied fact, that in each century of her existence the Lutheran Church has demanded, with firm and unanimous voice, the absolute necessity of faith in order to any real sanctifying or saving benefit being derived from the use of the Sacraments, which cuts up by the very roots the whole theory of the Romish *ex opere operato*, we may well endure the charge of occupying a higher position than others, as to our interpretation of the value and efficiency of those ordinances in which all rejoice.

Even so un-Lutheran a witness as Dr. C. Hodge, of Princeton,

very frankly declares that "the Lutheran definition of the Sacraments agrees in all essential points with that of the Reformed Churches." The approximation towards Rome, therefore, quoted from Guericke, cannot be so close as to endanger any "*essential point*." The same distinguished theologian very candidly admits, that "this doctrine of salvation by faith, or as Luther has it, by faith alone, has saved the Lutheran system from the virus of ritualism."

"The Lutheran Church" says Guericke, "regards the Sacraments as actions wherein God, through external signs by Him appointed, offers and confers His invisible and heavenly gifts; they see in the Sacraments visible signs, which in virtue of the divine word of promise pronounced over them, in such sense contain the invisible divine gifts they signify that they communicate them (*Mittheilen*) to all who partake of them, although only to believers to their good."

The divergency between the strict Lutheran view of the efficacy of the Sacraments, and that which is set forth in the Reformed symbols, does not display itself at first sight. The formal definitions are so near alike as to be almost interchangeable. It is not until we come to the question, 'how, in the Sacraments, are the things signified, conveyed and applied to those who by faith worthily receive them?' that this difference appears.

If we cannot account for this difference upon the supposition of a difference of philosophic conception, if after all allowance be made for the difference of interpretation of the same language there still remains an unresolved residuum, we cannot but ask, must there not be some definite efficacy predicated of the Sacraments? With the whole conception of a Sacrament before the mind, must we not associate with it, apart from all accessories, an effect possible *when all the conditions are met*, such as this view indicates, so as to attain the end designed, and vindicate the propriety of its appointment? It is not limiting salvation to the Sacraments, and irrespective of possibilities or intentions, to send all to perdition who may not be in possession or enjoyment of them, to say that the things intended by the Sacraments are secured by them and only by them. It is only to say that there was a place in Christ's kingdom for them, and that they accomplish the end for which they were appointed. We may with full comfort and assurance remit all supposable exceptions or cases of difficulty to the goodness and the wisdom of



him who will most wondrously provide for every emergency and harmonize all apparent contradictions.

The difficulty is sometimes felt, and the objection urged, that by ascribing intrinsic efficacy to the Sacraments, we would seem to invade the province and ignore the power of the Holy Spirit.\* The conflict supposed is only apparent, not real. No theory of the Sacraments can stand for a moment, that does not fully harmonize with the clear statements of the Scriptures as to the office and work either of the Father, the Son, or the Spirit. In this instance we have little difficulty in recognizing the agreement.

The representations of the Symbols, and of those authorized to interpret them, are uniform in their testimony on this point. This is placed beyond cavil or quibble by the express and definite language of Article V.† of the Augsburg Confession: "*through the instrumentality of the word and Sacraments the Holy Spirit is given, who, when and where it pleases God, works faith in those who hear the Gospel.*" Equally clear and definite are the statements of the . Apology and the Form of Concord. Chemnitz very emphatically declares: "The Sacraments are certainly not to be put upon an equality with the Holy Spirit, so as to be regarded as conferring grace in an equal and, in fact, an identical respect with the Holy Spirit Himself." \* \* "But most carefully and solicitously, when we dispute concerning the virtue and efficacy of Sacraments, must we avoid taking from God, and transferring to the Sacraments, what properly belongs to the grace of the Father, *the efficacy of the Spirit*, and the merit of the Son of God; for this would be the crime of idolatry; nor are the Sacraments to be added as assisting and partial causes to the merit of Christ, the grace of the Father, and the efficacy of the Holy Spirit; for this would involve the same crime."‡

"Baptism," says Gerhard, "is the washing of water in the word, by which washing the whole adorable Trinity purifieth from sin him who is baptized, not by the work wrought (*ex opere operato*), but *by the effectual working of the Holy Ghost* coming upon him, and by his own faith." After quoting the above, Dr. Krauth adds:§

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\* See Hodge's Theology, Vol. III., 503 et 510.

† See *Evang. Review* (1870), Vol. XXI., 598.

‡ Exam. Con. Trid.

§ Cons. Ref., p. 558.

"Such is the tenor of all the definitions our Church gives of Baptism, from the simple, elementary statements of the Catechism up to the elaborate definitions of the great doctrinal systems." Dr. Krauth's exceptional familiarity with all that has been written upon this subject, and his well-known pronounced position in regard to the nature and efficacy of the Sacraments, give additional value to this testimony. Speaking of the unjust, because unfounded, charges against our Church on this subject, he says: "She regards it as just as absurd to refer any blessings to Baptism, *as her enemies define it*, as it would be to attribute to swords and guns the power of fighting battles without soldiers to wield them."

Sacraments are one of the agencies employed by the Holy Ghost by which to accomplish his divine work. His presence and power in and through them are neither denied nor ignored, but on the other hand, are fully recognized and acknowledged by the Lutheran conception of a Sacrament. There can be no Sacrament without the element, and the word, and the Holy Spirit which unites them. Whenever, therefore, a Sacrament is administered, the entire constituency is necessarily present, else it would be no Sacrament.

It is, therefore, unjust to assert that our theologians ignore the operations of the Holy Ghost in their representations of the intrinsic efficacy of the Sacraments. There may or there may not be a special manifestation of the Holy Ghost, but this is not dependent upon the administration of the Sacrament, or caused by it.

The Holy Ghost is ever present in the preaching of the word, but not always with the same demonstration. Sometimes there are Pentecostal results, at others there are no results to be seen; yet it is ever the same word, armed with its own peculiar efficacy.

#### WHAT IS A SACRAMENT?

We are now prepared to ask and to answer the question, "What is the Church's definition of a Sacrament?" *The Apology* says very concisely: "The Sacraments are rites commanded by Christ, and to which is added the promise of grace." "A Sacrament is a ceremony or work, in which God holds out to us that which the promise annexed to the rite offers." Chemnitz, at great length and with characteristic force and clearness, lays down and defends the following particulars: "Any ordinance that is to be properly regarded as a Sacrament of the New Testament must have the following re-

quisites: 1. It must have an external, or corporeal and visible element or sign, which may be handled, exhibited, and used in certain external rites. 2. The element or sign, and the rite in which it is employed, must have an express divine command to authorize and sanction it. 3. It must be commanded and instituted in the New Testament. 4. It must be instituted not for a certain period or generation, but to be in force until the end of the world. 5. There must be a divine promise of grace as the effect or fruit of the Sacrament. 6. That promise must not only simply, and by itself, have the testimony of God's word, but it must by the divine ordinance be annexed to the sign of the Sacrament, and, as it were, clothed with that sign or element. 7. That promise must not relate to the general gifts of God, whether corporeal or spiritual, but it must be a promise of grace or justification, *i. e.*, of gratuitous reconciliation, the remission of sins, and, in a word, of all the benefits of redemption. 8. And that promise in the Sacraments is either signified or announced, not in general only, but on the authority of God is offered, presented, applied, and sealed to the individuals who use the Sacraments in faith."

Hutter describes it thus: "A Sacrament is a sacred rite, divinely instituted, consisting partly of an external element or sign, and partly of a celestial object, by which God not only seals the promise of grace peculiar to the gospel (*i. e.*, of gratuitous reconciliation), but also truly presents, through the external elements, to the individuals using the Sacrament, the celestial blessings promised in the institution of each of them, and also savingly applies the same to those who believe." By the grace of the gospel is understood "the applying grace of the Holy Spirit secured by the merit of Christ, and promised in the gospel, namely, grace that calls, illuminates, regenerates, etc."

From Gerhard we extract the following: "A Sacrament is a sacred and solemn rite divinely instituted, by which God, through the ministry of man, dispenses heavenly gifts, under a visible and external element, through a certain word, in order to offer, apply and seal to those using them and believing, the special promise of the gospel concerning the gratuitous remission of sins." Quenstedt says: "The word Sacrament is understood for the solemn rite instituted, prescribed and commanded by God, in which, by an external and visible sign, invisible benefits are graciously offered, conferred

and sealed." Baier says: "A Sacrament in general may be defined as an action, divinely appointed, through the grace of God, for Christ's sake, employing an external element cognizable by the senses, through which, accompanied by the words of the institution, there is conferred upon or sealed unto men the grace of the gospel for the remission of sins unto eternal life." Hollazius defines in this manner: "A Sacrament is a sacred and solemn rite divinely instituted, by which God, by the intervening ministry of man, through an external and visible element united with the words of the institution, presents something celestial (or heavenly gifts) to the individuals participating, in order to offer to all men and to confer upon and seal unto believers the grace of the gospel."

#### NUMBER OF SACRAMENTS.

It is a matter of surprise and congratulation that the Reformers so quickly and so unanimously settled the question of the number of the Sacraments. They were guided by the only principle which could secure them from mistake. Dropping for the time all that had been surmised and conjectured by the extravagant and fanciful schoolmen, they went for unerring instruction directly to the New Testament. Accepting only those which were admitted by all to be Sacraments, they sought out their essential elements or characteristics. Having thus decided what were the indispensable constituents of a Sacrament, such as are found in Baptism and the Lord's Supper, they proceeded to apply this test to all the other rites and institutions, which at one time or another had been called Sacraments.

These must have sure evidence of divine appointment. As none but God could promise grace, so none but God could appoint a sign or seal of it, or institute an ordinance that might be the means of communicating it. This is God's province and prerogative alone. They must necessarily signify grace, as Baptism, of cleansing, renewing, regenerating, and the Lord's Supper, spiritual food, nourishment, strength, and at the same time be seals of this grace, by which those who participate in faith may be sanctified and saved. They must necessarily have the promise of grace, *i. e.* "the special promise of the gospel concerning the gratuitous remission of sins." They must also be general and perpetual in character, and applicable to all classes, conditions and generations of men, co-extensive with the continuance of Christ's everlasting kingdom, from which they dare never be divorced.



Dr. Schmid, of Erlangen, says: "We cannot determine from the meaning of the word Sacrament *per se*, what sacred services are to rank as Sacraments; but the marks which belong to the two services, by common consent designated as Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are examined, and all other rites are excluded from this conception of a Sacrament which do not present similar marks. In doing this, it is not affirmed that the idea of Sacrament *per se* does not belong to them, but it is maintained that it is not applicable to them in the same sense as to the two genuine Sacraments."

In reference to this matter, Chemnitz says: "We will not contend about the definitions of this man or that man, of the ancients or the moderns, but we shall assume the ground which is beyond controversy and acknowledged among all. Baptism and the Eucharist are confessed by all to be truly and properly Sacraments." Baier is of similar opinion: "Thus, therefore, from the commonly received conceptions of the marks in which those rites agree that are undoubtedly Sacraments, it is apparent that those which may perchance be called Sacraments, but have not these common requisites, are not Sacraments in the same sense and reality as those which are properly so called, but are only equivocally designated as such."

Adhering strictly and unfalteringly to this rule, it very soon became manifest that the additional five Sacraments, endorsed by the Council of Trent, could not be accepted as valid Sacraments. They all lacked one or more of the essential elements of a Sacrament as discovered in Baptism and the Eucharist.

Concerning *absolution*, however, for awhile there had been some wavering. Chemnitz admits that some of the theologians would have granted it a place among the Sacraments, "because it has the application of a general promise to the individuals using this service. But still it is certain that absolution has not an established external element, or sign, or rite, instituted or commanded of God. And although the imposition of hands, or some other external rite, may be applied, yet it is certainly destitute of a special and express divine command. Nor is there any promise, that through any such external rite, God will efficaciously apply the promise of the Gospel. We have, indeed, the promise that through the word he wishes to be efficacious in believers; but in order to constitute anything a Sacrament, not only is a naked promise in the word required, but that by



a divine appointment or institution, it be expressly clothed with some sign or rite divinely commanded. But the announcement or recitation of the Gospel promise is not such a sign, for in that way the general preaching of the gospel would be a Sacrament. *Therefore absolution is not properly and truly a Sacrament in the way or sense in which Baptism and the Lord's Supper are Sacraments*; but if any one, with this explanation and difference added, would wish to call it a Sacrament on account of the peculiar application of the promise, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession declares that it would not oppose the idea."

The impossibility of defending the *sacramental character* of the added five of the Council at Trent has become so apparent that none but those acknowledging the supremacy of the Papacy for a moment affirm it. Admitting that they may be spoken of in the New Testament as existing rites in the Church, yet every rite is not a Sacrament. However expressive and useful these ceremonies may be, they have not been associated with the promise, the sign or seal of grace, by which to apply to believers the benefits of redemption. Their design is much more limited, and their application is not universal. *Matrimony* is indeed a divine institution, but has nothing to do with applying the benefits of redemption to believers. For confirmation, penance and extreme unction, *as expounded and practiced in the Church of Rome*, we fail to find any authorization whatever in the New Testament. As now existing, they were not instituted by Christ, but by man. Concerning *ordination* as a Sacrament, it may be remarked that it was never claimed by the Apostles, nor affirmed of them in the New Testament, that they conferred other than miraculous power. They did not possess, nor did they claim, the power of conferring the sanctifying and saving influences of the Holy Ghost. Much less is it declared or implied that apostolic gifts were designed to be perpetuated in the Church.

Can it be for a moment supposed that if Christ intended such an array of ordinances to be associated with the bestowment of grace, nearly *twelve* centuries should be permitted to pass before it should be discovered, and four more before the Church of Christ should be certified of it?

The relation of the Sacraments to the growth of *ritualism* and to the development of *hierarchy* is so intimate that we can easily understand why they were multiplied. *Protestantism* could not

have done what it has thus far achieved, nor would it to-day be the power it has become, had it accepted the perversions of Rome on this subject. We owe it to the gospel and to the heroic achievements of that second heralding of it, to guard with unsleeping vigilance all our teachings concerning the Sacraments.

At this point it may be a matter of interest to place in juxtaposition the several authorized formal definitions of a Sacrament.

1. *The Apology* (1530) says: "If we regard as Sacraments the external signs and ceremonies which God enjoined and with which he connected the promise of grace, it is easy to determine what are Sacraments; for ceremonies and other external things instituted by men are not Sacraments in this sense; because men cannot promise the grace of God without authority. Signs, therefore, which are instituted without the command of God, are not signs of grace, although they may be memorials to children and to the ignorant, like a painted cross."

2. *The first Helvetic Confession* (1536) says: "Sacraments are not only tokens of human fellowship, but also pledges of the grace of God, by which the ministers do work together with the Lord, to that end which He doth promise, offer and bring to pass; yet so, as we said before of the ministry of the word, that all the saving power is to be ascribed to the Lord alone." "Sacraments are visible patterns, instituted by God, of the grace, good will, and promises of God toward us; sure testimonies, and holy remembrances, the which under earthly signs do represent unto us, and set before our eyes, heavenly gifts, and do withdraw the mind from earthly to heavenly things. Moreover, they be tokens of Christian brotherhood and fellowship. Therefore, a Sacrament is not only a sign, but it is made up of two things, to wit, of a visible or earthly sign, and of the thing signified, which is heavenly; the which two, although they make but one Sacrament, yet it is one thing which is received with the body, another thing which the faithful mind, being taught by the Spirit of God, doth receive."

3. *The French Confession of Faith* (1559) says: "We believe that the Sacraments are added to the word for more ample confirmation, that they may be to us pledges and seals of the grace of God, and by this means aid and comfort our faith, because of the infirmity which is in us, and that they are outward signs through which God operates by his Spirit, so that he may not signify anything to us in

vain. Yet we hold that their substance and truth is in Jesus Christ, and that of themselves they are only smoke and shadow."

4. *The Scotch Confession of Faith* (1560) says: "We acknowledge and confess, that we have two chief Sacraments only, instituted by the Lord Jesus and commanded to be used of all those that will be reputed members of his body; to wit, Baptism, and the Supper or Table of the Lord Jesus, called the Communion of his body and his blood. These Sacraments \* \* not only do make a visible difference betwixt his people and those that were without his league, but also do exercise the faith of his children, and, by participation of the same Sacraments, do seal in their hearts the assurance of his promise and of that most blessed conjunction, union and society, which the elect have with their head, Christ Jesus. And thus we utterly condemn the vanity of those that affirm Sacraments to be nothing else but naked and bare signs."

5. *The Belgic Confession* (1561), Article XXXIII., says: "We believe that our gracious God, on account of our weakness and infirmities, hath ordained the Sacraments for us, thereby to seal unto us his promises, and to be pledges of the goodwill and grace of God towards us, and also to nourish and strengthen our faith; which he hath joined to the word of the Gospel, the better to present to our senses both that which he signifies to us by his word, and that which he works inwardly in our hearts, thereby assuring and confirming in us the salvation which he imparts to us. For they are visible signs and seals of an inward and invisible thing, by means whereof God worketh in us by the power of the Holy Ghost. Therefore the signs are not in vain or insignificant, so as to deceive us. For Jesus Christ is the true object presented by them, without whom they would be of no moment."

6. *The Heidelberg Catechism* (1563), Question 66, says: "The Sacraments are visible, holy signs and seals, appointed of God for this end, that by the use thereof he may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the Gospel; namely, that he grants us out of free grace the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life, for the sake of the one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross."

7. *The Church of England* (1563), in Article XXV., says: "Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us, by the

which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him."

8. *The Second Helvetic Confession*, (1566) Chapter 19, says: "Sacraments be mystical symbols, or holy rites, or sacred actions, ordained of God Himself, consisting of His word, of outward signs, and of things signified; whereby He keepeth in continual memory, and eftsoons (from time to time) recalleth to mind, in His Church, His great benefits bestowed upon man; and whereby He sealeth up His promises, and outwardly representeth, and, as it were, offereth unto our sight, those things which inwardly He performeth unto us, and therewithal strengtheneth and increaseth our faith through the working of God's Spirit in our hearts; lastly, whereby He doth separate us from all other people and religions, and consecrateth and bindeth us wholly unto Himself, and giveth us to understand what He requireth of us."

9. *The Irish Articles of Faith* (1615) say: "The Sacraments ordained by Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather certain sure witnesses and effectual or powerful signs of grace and God's good will toward us, by which He doth work invisibly in us, and not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him."

10. *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (1647) says: "Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and His benefits, and to confirm our interest in Him, as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ according to His word."

11. *The Westminster Shorter Catechism* (1647) says: "A Sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers."

12. *The Confession of the Waldenses* (1655) says: "We believe that God does not only instruct us by His word, but has also ordained certain Sacraments to be joined with it, as means to unite us to Jesus Christ, and to make us partakers of His benefits; and that there are only two of them belonging in common to all the members of the Church under the New Testament, to wit, Baptism and the Lord's Supper."



13. *The Methodist Episcopal Articles of Religion* (1784) say: "Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in Him."

#### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

A very important branch of our examination presents itself in the question of the public administration of these sacred ordinances. In what manner and under what circumstances are they to be employed?

They were given by Christ not to individuals, for special personal use, nor yet to the Apostles as a particular class, but to them as the first public functionaries of the Gospel, as its heralds. "*Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" Matt. xxviii. 19.

"*As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come.*" 1 Cor. xi. 26.

It must needs be that upon all questions pertaining to the doctrines and the ordinances of the Church, the Apostles received vastly more personal and official instruction than stands written in the brief gospel narrative. That which is essential and which is necessary to legitimate their teachings and their actions, is recorded. For their guidance in all doubtful cases, and for their preservation from all error, the promise was given them that the Holy Ghost should bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever Christ had said unto them.\* Since their day, as the result of their example and teaching, the administration of the Sacraments has been regarded as belonging primarily and principally to the Church in her organized capacity, and to her regularly chosen and appointed ministers. There seems to be no room for doubt that as the necessities of the case require, so it was intended to perpetuate an order of men in the Church who should preach the word and administer the Sacraments. Either theoretically or practically, this has been held and taught in every age and by every branch of the Church.

To constitute a ceremony or ritual in public worship a Sacra-

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\* John xiv. 26.



ment, it must not only be divinely appointed, but it must be used for a designated end, and administered according to prescribed order. We have no more command over the purpose or the manner of observance than of the matter, in so far as the manner may have been divinely instituted. Hafenreffer very justly remarks: "It is specially required that in each Sacrament *the whole action*, as instituted and ordained by Christ, should be observed; neither is the use of the Sacraments to be applied to foreign ends and objects. Hence, the rule: 'Nothing has the authority or nature of a Sacrament beyond the application and act instituted by Christ'—*e. g.*, if the water of baptism be employed for the baptism of bells, or for the cure of leprosy; or when the consecrated bread is not distributed and taken, but is either deposited in the pyx, or offered in sacrifice, or carried about in processions, this is not the use, but the abuse and profanation of the Sacraments." According to Hollazius: "God has intrusted the right of dispensing the Sacraments to the Church, which commits the execution or exercise of this right, for the sake of order and propriety, to the called and ordained ministers of the Gospel. But in case of extreme necessity, where the Sacrament is necessary and could not be omitted without peril of salvation, any Christian, male or female, may validly administer the Sacrament of Baptism or initiation." Have such cases of extreme necessity ever occurred, or can they even be imagined?

#### VALIDITY AND VALUE OF THE SACRAMENTS.

The relation of the character and intention of the administrator to the validity and efficacy of the Sacraments, has ever been regarded as an interesting and important inquiry. The Apology says: "The Sacraments are efficacious, even if they be administered by wicked ministers, because the ministers officiate in the stead of Christ, and do not represent their own person." Quenstedt says: "The Sacraments do not belong to the man who dispenses them, but to God, in whose name they are dispensed, and therefore the gracious efficacy and operation of the Sacrament depend on God (1 Cor. iii. 5), and not on the character or quality of the minister. The dispute about *the intention* of the minister is more intricate. Propriety requires that he, who administers the Sacraments, should bring to the altar a good intention of performing what God has commanded and instituted; a mind not wandering, but collected and

fixed. It is *absolutely necessary* that the intention of Christ be observed *in the external act*. I say in the *external act*, for the intention of the minister to perform the internal act is not necessary; that is performed by the Church. On the other hand, the Church of Rome teaches that the intention of the minister is necessary to the integrity, verity and efficacy of the Sacrament; that this intention has respect, not only to the external act of administering the Sacrament according to the form of institution, but to the design and effect of the Sacrament itself. Thus the Council of Trent: "If any one declares that the intention of doing what the Church does, is not required in the ministers whilst they dispense the Sacraments, let him be anathematized.' "

We may well rejoice, that the more rational, and we believe, more scriptural representations of the reformers on this subject, delivers us from all uncertainties of the unknown intention of the officiator. For, with all grace locked up in the Sacraments—with their efficacy and validity dependent entirely upon the undeclared will and purpose of the administrator—who can know whether his own Baptism was rightly performed, or whether he has ever once really received the saving efficacy of the Lord's Supper?

The salvation of every member of the Church of Rome, from Pope Leo XIII. to the last one that has participated in its ordinances, is placed upon the uncertain condition of the right intention of its clergy. Could anything more imperil one's safety, or more increase the power of the priesthood?

Without any such precarious and profitless power at command, the administrator, according to Protestantism, has the high and honorable prerogative of *consecrating* the elements, *i. e.*, of separating them from a common to a sacred use, which he accomplishes by reciting and pronouncing the words of the institution. Gerhard describes it thus: "The consecration is not (1) a mere recitation of the words of the institution directed only to the *hearers*, nor (2) is the change of symbols which consecration effects a mere change of names, a significative analogy, a representation of an absent celestial thing; \* \* \* but it is a sacred and efficacious action, by which the Sacramental symbols are truly sanctified, *i. e.*, separated from a common and set apart for a Sacramental use. But there is no (*a*) magical superstitious action dependent on the dignity or quality of the person, *i. e.*, on the power and character of the minister who

renders the Sacraments valid by the force of his intention; nor (*b*) is it to be thought that there is a certain occult subjective power in the sound or number of words by which the consecration is accomplished; (*c*) nor that by it the external elements are essentially changed and transubstantiated into the *res cœlestis*; but the presence of the *res cœlestis* and its union with the *res terrena* depend altogether upon the institution, command and will of Christ and upon the efficacy of the original institution, continuing in the Church even until the present day, which the minister, or rather Christ himself by the voice of the minister, continually repeats. The minister, therefore, in the consecration (1) repeats the primitive institution of the Sacrament according to the command of Christ; (2) he testifies that he does this not of his own accord, nor celebrates a human ordinance, but, as the divinely appointed steward of the mysteries, he administers the venerable Sacrament in the name, authority and place of Christ; (3) he invokes the name of the true God, that it may please him to be efficacious in this Sacrament according to his ordinance, institution and promise; (4) he separates the external elements from all other uses to a sacramental use, that they may be the organs and means by which celestial benefits may be dispensed."

In order, therefore, that the administrator may rightfully perform his official work and his act become a valid Sacrament, he must use the divine ordinance for the purpose for which it was instituted and in the way in which it was appointed. Over these he has no control, nor do his personal peculiarities exert any influence.

Whether he subjectively believes in the divine appointment of the Sacraments or not, whether he understands their meaning or not, whether he has full intention or no intention to secure to the recipient the spiritual blessings designed to be conveyed thereby, can in no wise affect the validity or the value of the ordinance, or destroy or diminish its efficiency. The Sacraments are of God, not of man. Their vitality resides in their divine appointment, and not in their human administration. They have been committed to the Church for the spiritual comfort and benefit of God's true children, who cannot be deprived of their priceless advantages by the unfitness, incompetency or perverseness of unworthy officials.

This does not, however, require in the administration of the Sacraments absolute uniformity of manner. As Hollazius has well

remarked: "The Church cannot change anything in the *substantials* of the Sacraments, yet she rejoices in the liberty of making some change in the *circumstantial*." The posture of the recipient *e. g.* is not regulated either by the command of Christ or by canon of the Church. The frequency of administration is not indicated by statute. The method of the distribution of the elements in the Eucharist, or of applying the water in Baptism, is nowhere prescribed.

The moral character of the recipient, however, is all important. His personal condition either of faith or unbelief, of uprightness or sin, controls and modifies the results of the participation either for grace or condemnation.

#### CONFLICTING TENDENCIES.

In regard to the Sacraments, we find in every age of the Christian Church, two conflicting tendencies, the result of two opposing theories. By some the disposition exists to over-estimate, and by others to undervalue. The results are alike lamentable and destructive. They are based upon two grand underlying peculiarities of man's mind. The one may be characterized as material, the other as spiritual; the one is largely matter-of-fact, the other mainly poetical; the one ever looking without itself for help, for a firm resting place, the other, self-conscious and self-confident, looks rather to its own capacities and resources; the one readily admits authority and accepts subjection, that it may be freed from responsibility and from uncertainty, the other resists all assumed control and prescribed order, that it may gratify its innate love for liberty and its earnest longings for independence; the one delights in a luxurious ritual, a spectacular display, an imposing ceremonial, the other disowns and despises mere external display, and rejoices in the power to lift the spirit out of the thralldom and dependence upon base matter.

The mission of the Gospel, as delivered a second time by the Reformers, is well adapted to mediate between these, to hold and cherish what is true and right and good in each, and by dropping the excesses and extremes of both, to secure that which is most scriptural and therefore most needed, and best calculated to develop spiritual life and godliness.

It is matter of clear demonstration, and may be easily verified by any who will make honest examination, that the Reformers, and

especially those whose views and writings gave form and direction to the development of the Lutheran faith and cultus, and whose opinions we have already largely quoted, that whilst they always accepted with unquestioning faith and child-like simplicity the clear word of God, and always held in highest reverence and esteem the divinely appointed ordinances as co-ordinate means of grace, they never represented these latter as the only and indispensable channels for conveying to men the benefits of Christ's redemption. They had studied too long and too thoroughly those Scriptures, which without, indeed, the form and order of scholastic or scientific theology, yet with the clearness and authority of inspiration, set forth the way of life as including repentance, faith, a pure heart, and a right life. The place and agency and indispensable value of the Sacraments are recognized, confessed and enjoined. But that the gospel scheme is embraced in a mere set of ceremonies, which work irresistibly, by their own inherent power, as drugs and medicines upon the body, they never taught and our Church has never believed. Yet to this does the Romish theory of the Sacraments degrade it. To this does ritualism, of any name, conduct it. The most diligent study of the Bible, and fidelity to its teachings, are as much needed to-day as at any former day, to rescue the Church from this dangerous tendency and to prevent a return to this spiritual enslavement. Apostolic teaching and apostolic example must be produced, and set over against the speculations of visionary mystics or ambitious churchmen. The genius of Christianity must be discovered and boldly opposed to the decisions of ecclesiastical conclaves. It must be declared with all plainness, that this so-called "*Sacramental theory*" cuts the very sinews of true piety and personal godliness. It secures salvation of its own unaided power, and, as is seen in the practical workings of it, there may be a glittering religiousness (that is, churchliness) without any moral rectitude. The extent to which this principle may mislead and destroy, can only be rightly appreciated when we read its doings in the sad decline of "the dark ages," and hear its true spirit in the ring of money which fell into Tetzels treasury, as the price of sins deliberately planned and to be as deliberately perpetrated.



## INFANT BAPTISM.

The strict application of the principle that faith is necessary to the attainment of the full efficacy of the Sacraments, as Luther says, "without faith Baptism profits nothing," would seem to invalidate the argument for Infant Baptism, which is held and practised in all our churches. The force of this objection is of sufficient magnitude to demand examination. The opponents of Infant Baptism use it constantly, as it presents a plausible reason for their position.

The question of infant membership, and the scriptural authority to bestow upon the children of believers the rite of Baptism, have been fully and ably discussed in the Lecture on Article IX., to which we refer. We do not propose to reproduce that argument, as our theme neither demands nor would justify it. The same remark applies with equal pertinence to the intensely interesting and much disputed question of "Baptismal Regeneration," a very full discussion of which may be found in *Evang. Rev.*, vol. viii., p. 303-354. We desire only to show that this objection has no real foundation, and that our theory and practice are in perfect harmony.

When Christ instituted the ordinance of Baptism, its grand design and application were unquestionably for adults. It could not be otherwise. The Apostles were the only confessed and recognized members of His kingdom. All others were yet without. The phraseology, the instructions and the requirements of this institution, clearly indicate this purpose. As in Paradise the human race began with adults, and every arrangement contemplated adult life, so in the founding of the Christian Church, its membership began with adults, and all its arrangements primarily contemplated adult spiritual life. But as the first creation included, and when necessity arose, disclosed full provision for infant life, so also in the Christian Church is there found full provision for the spiritual necessities of children, placed there by the unerring wisdom and grace of its founder. Adult membership carries with it the necessity to provide, in some way or other, for the relation of the children of believers. The absence of all command or intimation that the relation established and disclosed in the Old Testament would be abolished, or in anywise vitiated by the New Testament, compels its continuance. Nothing short of the authority of him who appointed it, can change or annul it. Without further formal command it remained standing, not, we conscientiously and firmly believe and

our Church strongly holds, in opposition, but in positive agreement, with all the requirements of this ordinance. It completes the idea of an initial ordinance, demanding faith of all who in adult life ask for admission, and disclosing its arrangements for securing the blessings of the covenant to all their household: "*The promise is unto you and to your children.*"

Of necessity, therefore, the primary type and the full idea of Baptism must be sought for, as it can only fully be seen, in adult Baptism, for that precedes and includes the right of infant Baptism.

It is thus that it is ordinarily and historically brought before us in the records of the New Testament, and thus that in all subsequent missionary movements it presents itself.\*

That everything embraced in the sacramental idea as pertaining to the Baptism of an adult may not apply to the Baptism of an infant, neither demands nor justifies its exclusion from what is common to both. The defence of infant membership is not placed upon this ground. Its lawfulness and obligation rest, we believe, upon the positive representations of the Bible, and the unvarying examples of God's true followers in every age as therein recorded.

The idea of the Sacrament, therefore, which contemplates infant as well as adult membership, must not be so limited in its interpretation and application, as to exclude either of those for whom it is intended. Its requirements being controlled by the circumstances of its subjects, the principle remains inviolate, that, notwithstanding the Baptism of infants, faith is the condition of its efficacy.

Dr. Schmid says: "The objection of the opponents, viz., 'the Sacraments are of no advantage without faith, but infants have no faith,' is considered untenable, for faith is taken into the account only in the case of adults, who are already capable of being influenced by the word."

#### DEFECTIVE ESTIMATE.

It may not be amiss, before closing this article, to deplore the confusion of ideas so largely prevailing in many Christian communities in regard to the value and efficacy of the Sacraments, and the little regard bestowed upon their observance.

We cannot resist the temptation nor forego the pleasure of presenting the following beautiful extract from the Commentary of

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\* See *The Reformers and The Theology of the Reformation*. Cunningham, 244.

Rev. Jean Daillé, minister of the French Reformed Church at Charenton, A. D. 1639, Col. ii. 12: "The Sacraments of Christ are not vain and hollow pictures in which the benefits of his death and resurrection are nakedly portrayed as in a piece of art, which gives us merely an unprofitable view of what it represents.

"They are effectual means, which he accompanies with his virtue and fills with his grace, effectively accomplishing those things in us by his heavenly power, which are set before us in the Sacrament when we receive it as we ought. He inwardly nourishes, by the virtue of his flesh and blood, the soul of him who duly takes his bread and his cup. He washes and regenerates that man within who is rightly consecrated by Baptism.

"And if the infirmity of infancy prevents the effect from appearing at the instant in children baptized, yet his virtue does not fail to accompany his institution, to preserve itself in them and to bring forth its fruits upon them in their person, when their nature is capable of the operations of understanding and will."

With many, the plausible but superficial statements that no good can come from a mere external ceremony, and that all true piety is seated in the heart and not in outward forms, suffice to set aside positive enactments and commanded duties. Not only is there either entire ignorance or more culpable neglect of the place and value of these divinely appointed ordinances, but there is profane disregard of the mind and will of Christ, expressed under circumstances the most solemn and impressive. The acknowledgment of the gospel histories as of canonical authority and the belief in the divine appointment of the Church necessitate the acceptance of these ordinances as the only authenticated means for maintaining and perpetuating its existence. Disregard and neglect involve a grave responsibility and expose to unmeasured risk and injury. Those placed beyond their reach or dying without a knowledge of them will not be judged with the same exacting severity, "*For unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required.*" Luke xii. 48. God will deal with extraordinary cases in an extraordinary manner.

But as for those that hear the word there can be no salvation without faith, so as to those who have access to the Sacraments there will be no other means afforded for obtaining whatever these are appointed to convey. There can be no question that "*the necessity of precept,*" as it is called by the theologians, exists in the posi-

tive words of their appointment; neither should there be any doubt of "*the necessity of means*;" not an absolute indissoluble necessity, as though God would limit his omnipotence to a single agency or the bestowment of his Holy Spirit to a single channel,\* but that having given an appointed instrumentality and having neither promised nor revealed any other, we are shut up thereto, for as Jesus said: "*If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead*;" or as the apostle Paul writes: "*Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.*"

We cannot be saved without faith, yet faith in itself does not save us, it is only the subjective condition under which alone the work of Christ becomes efficacious in our behalf. Eternal life is promised to the believing, but the believing will show their faith by their works, by their use of the means of grace and obedience to the words of Christ: "*Faith which worketh by love*," Gal. v. 6. Hollazius, on this subject, says: "The Sacraments are necessary by the necessity of the precept and the means. They have no absolute, but an ordinate or conditionate necessity." Quenstedt says: "Baptism is necessary in infants, not only by the necessity of the precept, but by the necessity of the means, because there is no other means by which they may be regenerated; but in adults it is necessary, because in that case it requires faith. The Eucharist is necessary to all Christian adults, by the necessity of the precept."

Correct views of the value and efficacy of the Sacraments will ever more and more tend to elevate them in our esteem; will show in clearer light the wisdom and the grace of their appointment. Under ordinary circumstances, we can as little dispense with them as with the Word. They are from the same gracious Lord, and for the same gracious purpose. A scriptural view of them, and an evangelical use of them, cannot but work our salvation.

Chemnitz says: "The Sacraments, which God Himself instituted to be aids to our salvation, can in no way be considered either useless or superfluous, or be safely neglected and despised. God who is rich in mercy \* \* \* desires to present His grace to us not

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\* Luther says: "God has not bound himself to the Sacraments so as not to be able to do otherwise without the Sacrament. So I hope that the good and gracious God has something good in view for those who not by any guilt of their own are unbaptized."

only in one way, that is by His mere word, but he desires also to help our infirmity by certain aids, namely by Sacraments, instituted and annexed to the promise of the Gospel, *i. e.* by certain signs, rites or ceremonies, obvious to the senses, that by them He might admonish, instruct or make us sure that what we see performed in a visible manner, externally, is effected internally in us by the power of God.

“In this way the Sacraments are, in respect to us, signs confirming our faith in the promise of the Gospel; in respect to God, they are organs or instruments through which God in the word presents, applies, seals, confirms, increases, and preserves the grace of the gospel promise in believers.”

Their beneficial effects are by no means to be limited to those only who participate in them. Their influence reaches as far as their observance may be seen or known. As Hollazius says: “The secondary designs of the Sacraments are: (*a*) That they may be marks of the Church, by which it is distinguished from unbelievers (‘and symbols of confession by which we separate ourselves from other sects.’ Quen.) (*b*) That they may be monuments of the benefits of Christ, Luke xxii. 18. (*c*) That they may be bonds of love, and the nerves of public assemblies, Eph. iv. 5; 1 Cor. x. 17. (*d*) That they may be incitements to the exercise of the virtues, (Baptism signifies the burying of the old Adam, Rom. vi. 4: the Lord’s Supper excites us to a grateful remembrance of the death of Christ, 1 Cor. xi. 26.)”

In all the wide range of theological inquiry, there is none more important or more interesting than that of the Sacraments. In the whole course of pastoral administration, there is no duty more impressive or more promising, and in the whole history of Christian experience there is nothing more central, more vital.

Beyond all others, does it become the ministry and membership of our own historical Church, to be true to the spirit and genius of the Reformers in regard to the estimate they placed upon the Sacraments. Therein emphatically should we grasp their spirit and imitate their example. More than in any other particular do we therein find the individuality of our Confession. Thereby especially may we hope to understand our capabilities as a Church, and by rising to proper self-consciousness, and then to a proper self-appreciation, we may attempt to influence others, by wielding the power



of a compact organization, armed with the omnipotence of divine truth, in behalf of the unifying of the Church and the conversion of the world.

Shall it not be that in this we may at last recognize our true mission among the discordant influences and dangerous tendencies by which we are surrounded? Holding fast with Luther's persistency to Luther's Protestantism, as crystallized in his guiding and controlling principle of "*Justification by faith*," we shall be able to retain whatever is vital in our Church-life, notwithstanding the violent changes of outward form and of internal organization to which we may be exposed.

The truest and worthiest manifestation of gratitude to God, and loyalty to the Church, is to bestow a believing appreciation upon these priceless means of grace, and ever to make a reverent use of them. Then shall we "*grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and forever, Amen.*" 2 Peter iii. 18.

# ARTICLE XIV.

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## THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

BY L. A. GOTWALD, D. D.

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IN looking at the catalogue of distinguished persons who, in this course of Lectures, have addressed you upon the successive Articles of our precious *Confessio Augustana*, I feel an unaffected diffidence in now appearing before you. The importance also of the subject, and the limited time for its consideration which, amid the unceasing duties of a large pastoral work, I have been able to command, intensify that diffidence.

Through the partiality, however, of my brethren who constitute the Board of Directors of this Seminary, I have been chosen to discharge this duty, and hence, bowing to their judgment in the matter, and waiving my own, I assume the labor and proceed to address you upon *The Fourteenth Article of the Augsburg Confession*.

### THE TEXT OF THE ARTICLE.

Article XIV. of the Augsburg Confession reads as follows:

"De ordine ecclesiastico docent, quod nemo debeat in ecclesia publice docere aut sacramenta administrare, nisi rite vocatus.—*Müller, Symbolischen Bücher*, p. 42.

"Vom Kirchen Regiment wird gelehrt, das niemand in der Kirchen öffentlich lehren oder predigen, oder Sacrament reichen soll, ohne ordentlichen Beruf."—*Müller*, p. 42.

"Concerning Ecclesiastical Orders [Church Government], they teach that no man should publicly in the Church teach, or administer the Sacraments, except he be rightly called [without a regular call]."—*Schaff's Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. 3, p. 15.

Both the Latin and the German texts of the "*editio princeps*,"

1531, underwent subsequently, by different hands, certain slight changes and emendations. The Codex Nuremburgensis, *e. g.*, has "*vocatis*" for "*vocatus*." The "*Editio Variata*" (1540 et 42) adds also the words: "Sicut et Paulus præcipit Tito, ut in civitatibus Presbyteros constituat," (Tit i. 5 sq.); an addition which was not, it is true, absolutely necessary, but which still, as an exposition of the final clause of the Article, serves a most useful purpose. For, as Bilmar (*Die Augsburgische Confession Erklärt von A. F. C. Bilmar, weiland Professor der Theologie zu Marburg*, p. 129) properly remarks concerning it: "Ein Satz, der zwar an sich nicht nötig, aber zur erläuterung des *rite vocatus* doch sehr dienlich ist."

In the German text Spalatin inserts, after the word "*gelehrt*," the additional words "*und gepredigt*," making the first clause read: "Vom Kirchen-regiment wird gelehrt und gepredigt." In the Anspacher deutsche Handschriften, No. 2, the final phrase "*ohne ordentlichen Beruf*," is transposed and inserted already after the word "*niemand*," so as to read "Vom Kirchen-regiment wird gelehrt das niemand ohne ordentlichen Beruf in der Kirchen öffentlich lehren oder predigen, oder Sacrament reichen soll." Spalatin also substitutes the words "*oder auch die*" for the single word "*oder*" just before "*predigen*." And he also substitutes the words "*er sey denn zuvor dartzu ordentlich beruffen*," for the words "*ohne ordentlichen Beruf*."—*Vide Zöckler über Die Augsburgische Confession*, pp. 244, 245.

These changes are all merely verbal, and do not, even in the slightest degree, affect the doctrinal sense of the Article.

#### THE HISTORICAL OCCASION OF THE ARTICLE.

This Article of the Confession occupies upon the subject of the ministry, concerning which it treats, a middle or conservative position. It stands midway between two extreme and equally false positions. Like a sharp double-edged sword it cuts relentlessly into the errors of both.

The one extreme against which it thus stands opposed, and which it designedly and clearly condemns, is the Anabaptist or fanatical extreme, so prevalent in the days of the Reformation, which denied the very existence of the ministerial office, and which taught that all whom impulse might at any time, or in any way or place, move to it, were equally entitled to speak and be heard in the Church as

religious teachers. Believing in what they called "the inward word or light," or "an immediate revelation," they held that the objective or written word was insufficient and ineffectual to enlighten, convert and sanctify man (*Schott on Augs. Con.*, p. 87); proceeding even so far as to maintain that the Spirit of God *could not* work by means of anything outer or external, and did not, in the least, bind himself thus to work through the objective or external (*Vide Plitt's Einleitung in die Augustana*, vol. 2, p. 172). Thus denying the necessity of the written *word*, as a means of grace, they logically, of course, also denied the necessity of a special *ministry* to preach that word. And hence, as we find, they loudly disowned the existence of such a thing as the ministerial office. They assailed the education of men for the ministry, holding that such education was unnecessary, since every true Christian was urged on by the Spirit of God, and was possessed of a superior inner wisdom. All Christians, they asserted, were, by the direct revelation of God's will within them, brought into possession of the truth, and were both competent and authorized, at will, to proclaim that truth to others.

Against this fanatical spirit, thus ignoring both the written word and the ministry as a special office to preach that word, Luther, from the beginning, set himself with unflinching and desperate earnestness, both by voice and pen assailing and denouncing it. In the year 1525, he issued his famous tract, entitled "*Die Himmlischen Propheten*," in which he utters against it his fiercest invectives. Nor did he rest until, at last, it was suppressed and its power for evil broken. Speaking of the Scriptures as the divinely ordained instrumentality by which man is brought to a knowledge of sin, and afterward also of the saving grace of God through Christ, he says: "Im selben Wort kompt der Geist und giebt den Glauben, wo und welchem er will. Wer dir eine andre Ordnung furschlagt, da zweifel nicht es sei der Teufel" (*De Wette*, 2, 579).

And against this same extreme and fanatical spirit, is this Fourteenth Article of the *Confession* directed. Instead of ignoring the word and sacraments, it recognizes them as the sole and only channels or means of grace to man; and instead of denying the ministerial office, it boldly asserts and assumes it, and teaches who, and who only, shall fill it.

The Article, it may be noted, is negative in its statement. It says who shall *not* perform ministerial acts, *i. e.* who shall *not* preach

the word, and who shall *not* administer the sacraments. But this statement of the doctrine negatively is really the expression of it in the strongest possible positive form. It is the emphatic declaration of the fact that there is an "*Ordo*," a special and sacred ministerial *office*, and that into this office no one shall dare to enter unless he be "rightly called" into it. The functions of the office, it declares, shall be discharged by those only who are in the office.

But this Article of the Confession is directed also, on the other hand, against another and opposite extreme concerning the ministry. Whilst so earnestly maintaining that there *is* an office of the ministry, it yet also, at the same time and with equal firmness, maintains that it is *only* an office. This Article, therefore, stands in open array against the teachings concerning the ministry of the Church of Rome, as well as against the fanatical Anabaptist spirit prevalent in the days of the Reformers. For Rome, as is well known, makes the ministry a priesthood, and the ministerial office she arrogantly exalts into a separate and superior ministerial order. (Vide "*Symbolism*," by J. A. Mœhler, D. D., pp. 311-316. Also "*Canones et Decreta Dogmatica Concilii Tridentini, De Sacramento Ordinis*.") Most inconsistently she makes little or nothing of the written *word*, as a means of grace, but, at the same time, makes much, and almost everything, indeed, of the visible or objective *sacraments*, which, rightly understood, are the visible and objective word. (Vide *Book of Concord, Apology*, p. 265.) She teaches (*Plitt's Einleitung in die Augustana*, Vol. II., pp. 366, 367,) that justifying grace is imparted to man through the channel or medium of the Sacraments. The primal source of this grace, she acknowledges, is Jesus Christ, who seated at the right hand of the Father, is essentially the only Mediator. But this grace he does not impart directly and without means. On the contrary he has ordained an "*Order*" to whom he has granted authority in his stead, to administer the sacraments, and who serve as mediators between him, the Head of the Church, and Christians, as members of the same. The bestowal of this authority thus to mediate grace from Christ to his people, in and through the sacraments, occurs only in what is itself a sacrament, viz. the sacrament of holy orders, or consecration to the priesthood, which can only be administered by a bishop. In or through this sacrament of consecration or priestly ordination, the person ordained receives, once for all, divine commission and authority to



administer the sacraments, and through them to impart saving grace to those receiving them. And in order that they may always and rightly administer the sacraments, there is further in ordination imparted to them an indestructible priestly character, (*character indelibilis*) and there is then impressed upon them a distinctive and indelible official token or relation. Just as Baptism distinguishes the baptized from those who are not baptized, so this character, imparted in ordination, divides the priesthood from the laity permanently and forever. The priesthood, by ordination, become a "*class*" or separate "*order*." They are lifted up by it above the great mass of other Christians, and placed in a range, not of official power merely, but of personal sanctity and superiority, far above them. To them only, as a special and distinct order, Christ gives the dispensing of sacramental grace, so that upon their mediating priestly services all Christians, if they wish to be saved, are entirely dependent, and to their authority they must be implicitly subject. Especially is all this the case in view of the fact that the priest in ordination, as the highest and most sacred prerogative conferred by that sacrament, receives divine power, in the sacrifice of the mass, to change the bread and the wine into the literal or real body and blood of Christ, and then to present them to God, as an acceptable offering for Christians, and as the highest possible act of worship. This power thus to offer the sacrifice of the mass the priest could not possess nor execute, had he not in ordination received also an especial call (*vocatio*) to execute it.

The Council of Trent distinctly declares: "If any one saith that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood; or that there is not any power of consecrating and offering the true body and blood of Christ, and of forgiving and retaining sins; but only an office and bare ministry of preaching the Gospel; or that those who do not preach are not priests at all: let him be anathema." And again: "If any one saith that order or sacred ordination is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord; or that it is a kind of human figment devised by men unskilled in ecclesiastical matters; or that it is only a kind of rite for choosing ministers of the word of God and of the sacraments: let him be anathema." (*Schaff's "Creeds of Christendom,"* Vol. II., p. 191. See, also, "*History of the Council of Trent, from the French of L. F. Bungener,*" pp. 369-372.)

Such is the theory of the Church of Rome, both concerning the ministry itself and the call to it. The ministry is an order, and he only is in this order who has, by Episcopal ordination, been placed in it.

Of this theory our Article XIV. of the Augsburg Confession is an emphatic refutation. It gives, upon its very face, a marked prominence to the public preaching or teaching of God's word, as the first and principal part of ministerial work, and it thus strikes a direct blow at the conception of the ministry as a priesthood, called or ordained simply or chiefly to offer sacrifices and to mediate between God and man. And whilst agreeing with the Church of Rome that no one should publicly in the church preach the word or administer the sacraments unless he be rightly called, there is yet here, by no means, an admission, as claimed by the Romish Church, that those only *are* thus rightly called whom a Romish Bishop, as one of the successors of the Apostles, and *jure divino*, has ordained. On the contrary, the Article, with noble silence, assumes the negative of all such arrogant claims, and does not stoop even to enter a formal denial. Article V. and XXVIII., however, in spirit at least if not in words, do deny it. The spirit also of the entire Confession, as also of the whole work of the Reformation, refutes it. For the Reformation, in its last analysis, was simply a sublime protest against this false and crushing sacerdotalism of Rome. The writings of the Reformers, also, and the Confessions throughout (*Apology*, VII., Eng. tr., p. 265) abound in refutations of this theory that ordination by the hands of a Romish bishop, or by any episcopal hands, as an exclusive, divinely-conferred prerogative, alone constitutes a valid and true introduction of a man to the office and work of the ministry. Luther says: "Sacerdos in novo testamento non fit, sed nascitur, non ordinatur, sed creatur." (*Opp. Jena*, 2, p. 580). And Melancthon in the *Apology* (Art. XIV., *De Ordine Ecclesiastico*) expressly declares, in his exposition of this Article, that the Reformers, for the sake of peace, were most willing to assist in maintaining the old ecclesiastical regulations and episcopal government, that is, were willing to concede to receive ordination from the hands of Romish bishops, provided they were to be recognized as bishops only in the New Testament sense of *pastor*, in which every minister of the gospel is a bishop, and provided it was mutually understood that their exercise of such episcopal func-

tions in ordination was not *de jure divino*, but only *de jure humano*. The Apology reads as follows: "The Fourteenth Article, in which we say that no one should be permitted to preach, or to administer the sacraments in the Church, except those only who are duly called, they accept, provided that we mean by this the call of priests, who are ordained or consecrated according to the canons. On this subject we have several times declared in this convention, that we are most willing to assist in maintaining the old ecclesiastical regulations and episcopal government, which is called *canonica politia*, provided the bishops would tolerate our doctrine, and receive our priests. But the bishops have hitherto persecuted and murdered our ministers, contrary to their own laws. Nor have we as yet been able to induce them to desist from this tyranny. Our opponents are, therefore, to blame that the bishops are not obeyed, and we are excused before God and all pious men. For since the bishops will not tolerate our divines, unless they reject the doctrine which we profess, and which we are bound before God to confess and maintain, we cannot recognize the bishops, and prefer to obey God, knowing that the Christian Church is wherever the word of God is correctly taught. Let the bishops see to it how they can answer for the distraction and devastation of the churches by such tyranny." (*Book of Concord*, Eng. trans., p. 267). The language, also, of the Smalcald Articles is very clear upon this point. Article X. (*De Initiatione, Ordine et Vocatione*) says: "If the bishops would discharge their office faithfully, and take due care of the Church and the Gospel, they might, for the sake of charity and tranquility, not however from necessity, be allowed the privilege of ordaining and confirming us and our preachers; yet with this condition, that all unchristian masking, mummery and jugglery should be removed. But since they neither are, nor wish to be, true bishops, but political lords and princes, who will neither preach, nor teach, nor baptize, nor administer the sacrament, nor transact any work or office in the Church, but force, persecute and condemn those who are called to this office, the Church must not, on their account, remain destitute of ministers."

This Article of our Confession, therefore, is, as we before remarked, in its very essence, a firm protest not only against the unchurchly and destructive extreme which entirely ignores and disowns the ministerial office, but also against the opposite extreme of

the Church of Rome which elevates the office into a holy order or sacrament. The Article owes its very existence, indeed, in the Confession, to these two equally wrong and ruinous conceptions of the ministry which then prevailed and which still prevail. Mœhler ("Symbolism," p. 315) speaking of this Fourteenth Article, says it is "an Article which in the Lutheran system is utterly unintelligible, and to which, therefore, we can assign no place therein." "It is, too," he adds, "a consequence of the accidental character of this Article that it merely asserts that every teacher is to be called in a lawful manner, without at all determining in what this lawfulness consists." But the Article is not unintelligible. It is not accidental. It had, in the minds of the framers of the Confession, a specific and clearly defined purpose; and it occupies, in the Confession itself, a designed and important place. It was seen to be needed, and hence also was inserted. Article V. speaks of the office itself; and this Article teaches by whom, and whom only, the functions of the office are to be exercised. *That* has reference to the object and nature of the ministry; *this* to the call to the ministry. *That* to the work; *this* to the workmen. And hence, also, the Article properly stands *in* the Confession just *where* it stands. For, the logical order of thought demands, not that it should come, as some might have supposed, immediately following Article V., but exactly where it does come—viz., after Article XIII., on "*The Use of the Sacraments*," and just before Article XV., "*Of Church Rites and Ordinances*."

#### THE SUBSTANTIAL HARMONY OF THIS ARTICLE WITH THE TEACHINGS OF OTHER PROTESTANT CONFESSIONS UPON THE SUBJECT OF THE MINISTRY.

But, whilst this Article of our Confession is thus utterly, in its spirit and scope, opposed to the Romish conception of the ministry, as also to the directly opposite or Anabaptist conception of it, it is yet pleasant to note that it is, upon this whole subject, in entire harmony with all the great historic Protestant Confessions which, since the days of the Reformation, have moulded the thought and the faith of Protestant Christendom. All Protestant Creeds recognize the ministry as an office, and either assert or imply that no one should discharge the special and sacred functions of the office unless he be first rightly inducted into the office. Or, as Dr. Hodge,



(" *Systematic Theology*," Vol. III., p. 514,) speaking upon the question of who should administer the sacraments, says: "Lutherans and Reformed agree in teaching, first, that the efficacy of the sacraments does not depend on anything in him who administers them; and, secondly, that as the ministry of the word and sacraments are united in the Scriptures, it is a matter of order and propriety that the sacraments should be administered by those only who have been duly called and appointed to that service."

In entire accord, therefore, with the teachings of this Fourteenth Article of our Confession, which we are now considering, the language of the Westminster Confession (*Confession of Faith*, Chap. XXVII., 4) is:

"There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ, our Lord, in the Gospel. That is to say, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the word, lawfully ordained."

The Thirty-Nine Articles, also, of the Church of England, upon this matter of the necessity of a call to the ministry, as, indeed, upon almost every other point, simply echo the teachings of our Augsburg Confession. Article XXII. declares:

"It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard."

The First Helvetic Confession, also, composed by a number of Swiss divines, delegated and assembled for the purpose in the city of Basle, in the year 1536, and which was the first Confession which represented the faith of all the Reformed cantons of Switzerland, says:

"This office and this service of the ministry shall be entrusted to no one unless he has been first well instructed concerning the knowledge and will of God, blameless in piety and uprightness of life, and been found and recognized by the ministers and proper authorities of the Church to be earnest and zealous to advance the glory of the name of Christ."—*Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III., p. 221.

The language also of the *Second* Helvetic Confession, drawn up



by Henry Bullinger, of Zürich, Zwingli's successor, first published in Latin in 1566, and which Hagenbach calls "*ein wahres dogmatisches Meisterstück*," is equally emphatic upon this point of the necessity of a call to the ministry. It says (Chap. XVIII., Sec. 8, *D. Ministris Ecclesiæ*):

"No one ought to assume to himself the honor of the gospel ministry, *i. e.*, no one should receive it for himself as a mere gift of patronage, or by any trick or art, or by his own mere will. Ministers of the Church may be called and chosen in a lawful ecclesiastical election; *i. e.*, they may be solemnly elected by the Church, or by those deputed by the Church for this purpose, in a proper and regular manner, without disorder, discord or contention. And those who are elected shall be ordained by the presbyters (*senioribus*), with a public charge or address and with the laying on of hands. Hence, we here condemn all those who run of their own accord, when they have neither been elected, sent, nor ordained. (Jer. xxiii. 32.) We condemn a ministry which is unqualified, and not instructed nor possessed of the gifts necessary for the pastoral office."—*Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III., p. 280.

In the French Confession of Faith, also, prepared principally by Calvin, revised and approved by a Synod of Paris in 1559, and adopted by the Synod of La Rochelle in 1517, there is this language upon the point before us:

"We believe that no person should undertake to govern the Church upon his own authority, but that this should be derived from elections, as far as it is possible and as God will permit. And we make this exception especially because sometimes, and even in our own days, when the state of the Church has been interrupted, it has been necessary for God to raise men in an extraordinary manner to restore the Church, which was in ruin and desolation. But, notwithstanding, we believe that this rule must always be binding; that all pastors, overseers and deacons should have evidence of being called to their office."—*Schaff's Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III., p. 377.

And the same is taught, also, in all the other principal Confessions dating back to the Reformation period; *e. g.*, in the First Scotch Confession (1560), in the Belgic Confession (1561), in the Irish Articles of Religion (1615), and in the Savoy Declaration (1658), as also in other Confessions of minor historical importance.

Hence, no matter how widely our different Protestant Confessions differ upon *other* points, and no matter how much each one of our various Protestant branches may, in this day of laxity both in doctrine and practice, disregard and violate its own Confession, it nevertheless is a fact that in this one point of the necessity of a regular call before assuming to exercise the office of the gospel ministry, they do all theoretically and with hearty unanimity agree, and do all with one accord hold and teach, in the words of this Fourteenth Article of our own Confession: "De ordine ecclesiastico docent, quod nemo debeat in ecclesia publice docere aut sacramenta administrare, nisi rite vocatus."

#### THE HARMONY OF THIS ARTICLE WITH THE TEACHINGS OF GOD'S WORD.

But a question of greater importance concerning this Article of our Confession is, not whether it accords with the teachings of other Confessions, for they and it may possibly both, as uninspired and merely human productions, be wrong, but whether it accords with the teachings of the word of God. That alone is infallible. All Confessions are right in so far—and only in so far—as they agree with it and teach what it teaches. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah viii. 20.) But, concerning the teachings of the sacred Scriptures upon the point under consideration, there can be no possible room for doubt. They are most explicit in declaring, both by example and precept, both by assertion and inference, that only he who has first been rightly called and inducted to the office of the ministry can or dare with safety assume the discharge of its functions. This is so repeatedly and specifically declared that it would be comparatively easy to fill pages with citations of passages in the way of evidence; and a vastly harder task would be to quote even one instance where, with divine approbation and blessing, men publicly proclaimed God's word or administered his ordinances unless they were first called and commissioned so to do. "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (1 Cor. xiv. 33.)

Moses did not of his own accord assume the office of law-giver and leader of the people of Israel, but God called him to it when he spake to him out of the burning bush in the wilderness. (Ex. iii.

10-18.) Aaron entered the office of priest only when once he had received from the Lord, by the hands of Moses, his commission to enter upon it. "And the Lord said to Aaron, 'Go into the wilderness to meet Moses.' And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him." (Ex. iv. 27, 28.) The Levitical priesthood, also, was not a merely assumed human undertaking; but the tribe of Levi was separated by God himself from all the other tribes, and, by special and solemn services of consecration, were devoted to their sacred duties. (Numb. iii. 5-13.) The prophets, also, who were true prophets of God, were called and sent forth upon their prophetic mission, with clear and undeniable credentials. Some, it is true, at various times, assumed to prophesy in God's name, just as some do now, whom God did not send, and upon whom he denounces his severe displeasure. "I have not sent them, saith the Lord, yet they prophesy a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish; ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you." (Jer. xxvii. 15.) But God's true prophets were all *called* to prophesy. God called, inspired, commissioned them. They ran because he sent them. Their message was the "burden of the Lord" to the people. And the people recognized them as thus being God's prophets—men filling a special office—and consecrated, with authority, to a separate and holy work. Thus was Samuel, the head of the prophetic college, directly called. "The Lord called Samuel and he answered 'Here am I.'" (1 Sam. iii. 4.) The "visions" which Isaiah saw and uttered, were visions which God revealed to him, and bade him make known. (Isaiah i. 1.) Jeremiah's commission predates even his birth: "Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 'Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.'" (Jer. i. 4, 5.) The same is true, also, of all the prophets: they did not prophesy until they were called and moved by God to do so. And not only did God thus, under the old dispensation, throw a sanctity around the priestly and prophetic offices by specially calling and endowing men to fill them, but he declared this sanctity in a yet more impressive manner, namely by the sudden and fearful displays of his displeasure with which he, on several occasions at least,

visited those who, without being called and separated to the work, irreverently assumed the functions of these offices. "Thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons," said God to Moses, "and they shall wait on their priest's office; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death." (Num. iii. 10.) When Miriam and Aaron murmured against Moses, and said, "Hath the Lord spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?" the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and when "the cloud departed from off the Tabernacle, behold Miriam was leprous white as snow." (Num. xii. 1-10.) The case, also, of King Uzziah is a striking one in proof of God's displeasure against those who dare to intrude themselves, uncalled, into the priestly or ministerial office. (2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21.) Very signally, also, did God display his displeasure against all unbidden or uncalled assumption of official and sacred duties, in the case of Uzzah, when the Ark was brought by David from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. (2 Sam. vi. 3-7.) And similarly did he also show his anger against all such irreverent presumption when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the wicked king who made Israel to sin, once stood by the altar to burn incense. When the prophet denounced him for it, and he stretched out his hand to seize and punish the prophet, "his hand which he put forth against him, dried up so that he could not pull it in again to him." (1 Kings xiii. 1-4.)

Examples, in proof of the position that only those who are rightly called should perform ministerial acts, abound also in the New Testament. The harbinger of the Messiah, John the Baptist, was "filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," to go before the coming Redeemer in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke i. 15-17.) The Seventy had their commission directly from the Master, and were sent by him, "two and two, into every city and place whither he himself would come." (Luke x. 1.) So especially were the Twelve called and ordained to their special office. "And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two." (Mark vi. 7.) "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." (John xv. 16.) And so when Judas, one of these twelve, by transgression



fell, his place, whether properly or not, was filled by the election of Matthias to the apostleship, thus showing at least that the Church of Jerusalem believed a "call" to the office necessary before assuming the duties of the office. St. Paul's call was a direct and miraculous one. The apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, exhorts him "not to neglect the gift which was in him, which was given him by prophecy, and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (1 Tim. iv. 14), and, himself thus a called and ordained minister, he bids him ordain others to the same office, saying, "and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. ii. 2.) And the same exhortation he addresses, also, to Titus, saying, "for this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee." (Tit. i. 5.) The apostle, also, bids Timothy "lay hands suddenly on no man," *i. e.* not in too much haste to ordain any one to the work of the ministry, lest one not rightly or truly called would thus be inducted by him into the sacred office, who would do much harm, and Timothy himself would thus become partaker of his sins. (1 Tim. v. 22). Paul and Barnabas, also, in their missionary journey, not only confirmed the souls of the disciples, and exhorted them to continue in the faith, but they also, we read, "ordained them elders in every church" (Acts xiv. 23), *i. e.* set apart by ordination certain chosen and qualified men as pastors of the churches. And, as the highest possible proof of the point under consideration, let us never forget that even our Saviour, although divine and possessed of an anointing for his official work from all eternity, yet did not enter upon it, or assume the public discharge of its functions, until he was first, by Baptism and the descent upon him of the Holy Spirit, solemnly and visibly set apart to it and inaugurated into his Messianic or ministerial office. (Matt. iii. 13-17.)

The Scriptures, however, teach this truth of the necessity of a call to the ministry by many specific precepts and inferences also. The Saviour, *e. g.*, in many of his parables, where the servants (ministers) are represented as being employed, directed, and rewarded by God as the Great Householder and the Lord of the Vineyard, thus teaches it. (*See Dr. Diehl's Essay, Lutheran Diet*, Vol. I, p. 266). The same is implied, also, in his exhortation to his



followers to pray that men may be raised up, qualified and sent forth to labor in the Church as ministers: "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." (Matt. ix. 38.) Above all, the Saviour's commission to the Apostles, and to the ministry of all ages, teaches it. "All power," he declares, "is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. xxviii. 18-20.) And the same is also repeatedly declared in the writings of the Apostles, "God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (1 Cor. xii. 28-30.) "God hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." (2 Cor. v. 18.) "Let a man so account of us as the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." (1 Cor. iv. 11.) And James (iii. 1) exhorts: "My brethren, be not many masters or teachers (*διδάσκαλοι*), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation;" *i. e.* let not many aspire to be religious teachers or guides to the Church, for not many are qualified or called to be, and only those who are qualified and called should be. Or, as Luther renders it: "Lieben brüder, unterwinde sich nicht jedermann Lehrer zu sein; und wisset das wir desto mehr Urtheil empfangen werden."

Beyond all possibility, then, in view of the passages which have now been cited, of honest doubt or refutation, it stands proven from the word of God that there is such a thing as a "*Call to the Ministry*," and that as this Article of our Confession teaches, "no man should publicly in the church teach or administer the sacraments except he be rightly called," *i. e.*, really has this right or regular call. Or, as St. Paul expresses it: "No man taketh (*i. e.*, ought to take) this honor unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." (Heb. v. 4.)

HARMONY OF THE ARTICLE WITH THE VIEWS OF LUTHER AND OF  
THE GREAT LUTHERAN DOGMATICIANS.

The views of Luther and of the great Lutheran dogmaticians are, of course, all in entire accord with the teachings of this Article of our Confession which we are now considering. With one voice all assert the necessity of a "*rite vocatus*" before assuming the discharge of ministerial acts or duties. Luther, it is true, was charged by the Romanists with virtually, by his teachings, abrogating the ministerial office, and with breaking down all distinction between the ministry and the laity. But no charge ever preferred against the great Reformer was more utterly false and groundless.

Luther held that all Christians, in Baptism, become priests, and are endowed with all the spiritual rights and duties of priests. But he made a distinction, for the sake of order and in simple justice on the part of one toward others, between the *possession* of priestly rights and duties and the *exercise* of those rights and duties. The exercise of these priestly functions, he held, was a limited one, by virtue of the fact that every Christian is a member of a communion, the Church. If every one, according to his own pleasure, where and whenever it may please him, should assume to perform his priestly duties, he would, by so doing, interfere with the rights of his fellow Christians, and would thereby bring about an injurious or destructive confusion in the Church. All individual Christians cannot in the same manner and at the same time exercise the functions of their Christian priesthood toward others. This is simply impossible, and, under ordinary or normal circumstances, where there is a church, it is also entirely unnecessary. The church or congregation as an organic unit or whole, Luther held, is bound to preach the word of God; but she can, of course, do this only through individual persons whom she has thereto authorized and commissioned. These individual persons whom she thus authorizes and commissions speak in her name and in her stead. She, the Church, speaks by the mouth of these individual persons, who are her instruments. She, however, is really the person speaking.

Thus is there, according to this view, in the Church and grounded in her very being, a *church office*, viz., the office of the ministry. She cannot live without it. Where the Church is there is also this office, and there also will its functions be exercised. And each

Christian, in the exercise of the functions of the ministerial office by those appointed by the Church thereto, sees the fulfilment of the command which makes the preaching of the gospel the duty of the entire Christian communion, as also his own individual duty. And thus, also, in the very nature of things, are there limits set to each Christian in the exercise of his priestly rights and duties, beyond which, as one in a body where all have equal rights and duties, he neither need nor dare justly go.

Luther's words, in thus teaching that the ministerial office grounds itself in an obligation resting upon the Church as a whole, have been interpreted as if he rested the existence of the ministerial office wholly upon a voluntary contract, entered into between a certain number of Christians who, by mutual consent, conferred upon *one* of their number that which was the duty of *each* of them. This has been declared too slender a foundation upon which to rest the office, imperiling the very existence of the same. But, in supposing this to have been Luther's view of the office of the ministry, injustice is perhaps done him. Luther did, indeed, teach that in the official discharge of the duties of the ministry by those elected or ordained to the office, every Christian could and should see a discharge of his own duties, as one of the universal priesthood, and that he should recognize himself as having conferred upon the one officiating the exercise of his duty as far as it is a public or congregational duty. But in thus teaching, Luther by no means held that in this lay the *root* or *origin* of the office, as though it were created by or sprung merely from some such contract made by men. On the contrary, he clearly recognized the root of the office as one planted by God himself. He knew that as the Church is before the individual Christian, so also is the office of the ministry, or all official action, before the action of the individual. He repeatedly asserts that the Church cannot be without the office; and it is not left to the option of individual Christians, be their number ever so great, whether or not there shall be an office. By their agreement they do not create the office, but they simply fill the office, already existing, with a man of their choice. They simply make an office-bearer. The consecration by the bishop, Luther wrote to the German nobility, is nothing else than as if he, instead of and in the name of the whole assembly, took one of the number, all having inherently equal power or rights, and set him apart to exercise this power or right for the

rest. Or, it is as if ten brothers, princes, equal heirs, should choose one of their number to administer the inheritance for them. The royal or princely right is there, and belongs to all; the administration of the same is, however, conferred upon one. The same is true of the office of the ministry and the election or appointment of men to fill the same. The office exists. It exists in the Church, in which, as equal spiritual priests, all Christians have equal priestly rights and duties, and some of whom the Church thus, out of her own number, chooses and sets apart to discharge for the rest the public priestly functions devolving inherently upon each and all. Hence, since the office is a permanent one in the Church, there remains no occasion for each individual Christian to exercise his priesthood in public teaching; nay, simply because there is such an office, and that office is filled by men whom the Church has specially appointed to the office, it becomes the duty of all not thus appointed to be silent and not assume thus to teach. From the very beginning of his work, Luther insisted upon it that only those thus called to the office of the ministry should discharge the duties of that office. He distinguished sharply between the right and the exercise of the right. All Christians, he taught, are priests, but all are not pastors. (*Vide Plitt's Einleitung in die Augustana*, Vol. II., pp. 370-372.) "Either show," he indignantly writes to those assuming to teach without a call, "either show your call and command to preach, or keep silence and presume not to preach. For here an office is in question, yea an office of preaching. But an office no one can have without a command and call." (*Erlangen Ed.*, 31, 218.) Again: "There must be bishops, pastors, or teachers, who publicly and specially administer the four things mentioned above, on account and in the name of the Church, but by the appointment of Christ, as St. Paul says, Eph. iv. 11. For the multitude cannot do this, but must commit it, or have it committed, to an individual. What would the consequence otherwise be, if each would speak and officiate, and none would give way to the other? It must be committed to one alone, and he alone must be permitted to preach. The rest must all hold their peace and consent to it." (*Erlangen Edition*, 25, 364.) And very emphatically does he repel the slanders of his enemies upon this point, in writing to Emser in 1521: "Thou sayest falsely that I make bishops, priests and pastors of all laymen, and teach that they may officiate without a call; and, holy as thou



art, conceal the fact that I also write that no one should presume to administer the office without being called, except in extreme necessity." (*Erlangen Edition*, 27, 255. See, also, 39, 215, 216.)

No one, therefore, held more clearly and tenaciously to the necessity of a call to the ministry, before assuming the duties of the ministry, than Luther. If necessary, passage upon passage could be quoted in proof. (*Vide Dr. Walther's "Kirche und Amt,"* pp. 174-187, also, *Prof. M. Loy, "The Ministry,"* pp. 74-106).

Equally clear and emphatic in their utterances upon this point are all the leading dogmatists of our Church since Luther's day. With unbroken unanimity they insist upon what our Article calls the "*rite vocatus*."

Thus Chemnitz declares:

"All Christians are indeed priests (1 Pet. ii., Rev. i), because they offer spiritual sacrifices to God. Each one also at his own home both can and should teach the word of God (Deut. vi. 7, 1 Cor. xiv). Nevertheless it is not every Christian who should take upon himself the public ministry of the word and sacraments. For not all are apostles, not all are teachers (1 Cor. xii. 29), but those only who by a special and legitimate call from God, (*sed qui peculiari et legitima vocatione a Deo ad hoc ministerium segregati sunt*) are set apart to this ministry." (*Exam. Conc. Trid.*, II., de s. ord. c. 1).

And again:

"It is certain from the word of God that in the Church no one ought to be heard who has not been lawfully called. For Paul distinctly says, (Rom. x. 15) that they cannot preach, *i. e.* by right, even though they may actually attempt it, who have not been sent. And in Jer. xxiii. 21, God complains: 'I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran.' Indeed, the churches ought not and cannot with any profit, hear those who have not testimonies of a lawful call." (*De Ecclesia*, 3, 119.)

Gerhard says:

"We must distinguish between the *general* command and vocation (*distinguendum enim inter generale mandatum et vocationem*) which all the pious receive when they are made Christians, \* \* \* and the *special* vocation or call, (*et inter specialem vocationem*) by which the administration of the word and sacraments in the public assembly of the Church is, by the Church's public consent, entrusted to certain suitable persons, which vocation is not common to all



Christians, as appears from 1 Cor. xii. 29; Eph. iv. 11; (*Loci Theologici. De Ministerio Ecclesiastico*, Sec. 67.)

Quenstedt says:

"When, in the Church properly established through the word, the regular or appointed ministers of the Church rightly discharge the duties of their office, it is permitted no one to enter the office of teaching without a legitimate call, but it is in every way necessary that each one be legitimately called and chosen, even a special calling is necessary in order to enter (rightly) the office of the ministry, so that, without it, it is permitted no one to teach publicly in the Church, and to administer the sacraments Augs. Conf. Art. XIV., etc. *Vide Quenstedt's Theologia Didactico Polemica, Pars Quarta, Caput XII., Sectio II., p. 397.*

Carpzov says:

"Access to the office of public instruction is granted to no one unless he has in due form been first called."

Hunnius says:

"No one who desires to be a minister of God ought to push himself into the office, but ought to be properly ordained for this purpose." (*Epitome Credendorum, Eng. trans., p. 240.*)

Hollazius, in answer to the question, "*Quid est Ministerium Ecclesiasticum?*" says:

"*Ministerium ecclesiasticum est officium sacrum et publicum divinitus institutum, et certis atque idoneis hominibus legitimam vocationem commendatum, ut peculiari potestate instructi verbum Dei doceant, Sacramenta administrent, et disciplinam ecclesiasticam conservent ad gloriam Dei, hominum que salutem promovendam,*"—(*Vide Hollaz., Examen de Min. Eccl., Pars iv., Cap. 2, p. 859.*)

Thus, with one consent, do our great Lutheran theologians enforce this doctrine of the necessity of a call to the ministry, and thus do all repeat and emphasize the truth taught in our Article, viz., "that no man should publicly in the Church teach or administer the Sacrament except he be rightly called, or without a regular call."

And yet this discharge of ministerial duties is not always and absolutely to be limited only to those who by a right call have been placed in the ministerial office. The rule has its exception. Under certain special circumstances, any Christian, even though he be not a minister, may and should exercise at least some of the

functions of the ministry. From Luther down through the entire line of our Lutheran dogmaticians, it has by all been freely admitted and taught that, *in all cases of absolute necessity*, any Christian layman, and even any Christian woman, may preach the word, administer baptism, and pronounce absolution. This exception, like the rule itself, although, of course, for a very different reason, springs from the spiritual priesthood of each Christian. In the former case, or in the observance of the rule as expressed in Article XIV. of our Confession, there is on the part of each individual Christian a *withholding* of the exercise of his priestly rights, out of regard to the equal priestly rights of his fellow Christians; and in the latter case, *i. e.*, when in a case of necessity, although not in the office of the ministry, he performs ministerial duties, he simply *resumes* the exercise of his rights, and he discharges those duties on the strength of his commission as one of the universal priesthood of believers.

And hence the *Appendix to the Smalcald Articles* says: "In case of necessity, a mere layman may absolve another and become his pastor; as St. Augustine relates that two Christians were in a ship together, the one baptized the other, and afterward was absolved by him." (*Book of Concord, Eng. trans.*, p. 568.)

Luther says:

"If a number of pious laymen were taken prisoners and placed in a wilderness, without a priest consecrated by a bishop, and these agreed among themselves to elect one of their number, whether married or not, and commit to him the office of baptizing, administering the Eucharist, absolving and preaching, he would undoubtedly be a priest, as much so as if all bishops and popes had ordained him. Hence it is that, in case of necessity, every one can baptize and absolve, which would not be possible if we were not all priests." (*Luther's Works, Erlangen Edition*, 21, 282.)

Gerhard, L. T. (*De Min. Ecc.*, § 74):

"In a case of extreme necessity, when a man must either depart without baptism or baptism must be administered by a private person, it is better that baptism be administered by a private person than that the man should depart without baptism; nevertheless, the administration of baptism ordinarily belongs to the ministers of the Church."

Hollazius (*Examen Theologicum De Min. Ecc.*, q. viii., obs. 2):

"In the collecting and establishing of a Church, where there are

not those present who, having been ordinarily called, may teach, nor any at hand to give a call, in this extreme case of necessity, where the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbors are alone to be regarded, we willingly grant that any Christian is bound to instil the catechetical milk of righteousness to those unskilled in speech."

Ib. (*De Baptismo*, q. iv.):

"Extraordinarily and in case of necessity, any pious Christian, whether male or female, acquainted with sacred rites, can administer baptism."

Ib. (*De Eucharista*, q. iv.):

"Not even in a case of necessity is the administration of the Holy Supper to be committed to a layman or private Christian; because there is a distinction in this respect between Baptism, which is a sacrament of initiation, and the Eucharist, which is a sacrament of confirmation. Concerning the necessity of Baptism, Christ bears witness (John iii. 5). But the use of the Holy Supper has not been made of equal necessity; and therefore when there can be no recourse to the ordinary ministry, then the remark of Augustine is in place: 'Believe and thou hast eaten.'"

Thus, in case of necessity, as Luther and all our theologians admit, may those *not* in the ministerial office or those not having what our Article designates the "*rile vocatus*" perform ministerial acts. But let it be clearly observed that where this is allowed there must be a real and absolute necessity. In all other cases it is irregular and wrong for a layman to usurp the functions of the ministry. Where a minister is present, or where the presence and service of a minister could in any way be secured, there it is the minister alone who can rightly preach the word or administer the sacraments; and for a layman there and under such circumstances to attempt these duties, is unwarranted presumption. Our great Luther in all that he wrote upon the priestly rights and duties of laymen, was nevertheless always most careful to guard jealously the distinctive prerogatives of the ministerial office, and he always strenuously asserted that there must be an actual and extreme *necessity* in order to justify a layman in publicly teaching in the Church or administering the sacraments. This belonged, not to the spiritual priesthood, but to the pastoral office; and only by those *in* the office, save in case of extreme necessity, shall these duties be discharged. "In einer Gemeinde," he

writes, "da Jedem das recht frei ist, soll sich deselbigen niemand annehmen ohne der ganzen Gemeinde Willen und Erwählung; *aber in der Noth brauche sich deselbigen wer da will.*" (W., x., 1858.) Again: "Niemand soll selbst sich des ungerufen unterwinden *es wäre denn die äusserste Noth.*" (Walch., xviii., 1597.) And again, upon the supposition that the Christian is where there is no Church and no ordained ministry, and where all around him are perishing in sin, he writes, "In solchem Falle sieht ein Christ aus brüderlicher Liebe die *Noth* der armen verdorbenen Seelen an, und wartet nicht ob ihm Befehle oder Brief von Fürsten oder Brief von Bischöfen gegeben werde, *den Noth bricht alle Gesetze und hat kein Gesetz.*" (Walch., x., 1801-3.)

Laymen being thus justified, in Luther's judgment, in the exercise of the functions of the office of the ministry, only in case of the most strenuous necessity, our whole modern system of lay evangelism or lay preaching finds no countenance whatever in his teachings; and, were he now living, above that of all others would his voice, in thunder tones, be raised against it, condemning it as unscriptural in principle and unprofitable and injurious in practice. Would it not be well, merely for the sake of consistency if for no other and higher reason, if those bearing the Lutheran name and boasting at times so loudly of their Lutheran relationship, were also to know more of Luther's sound and conservative views upon this whole subject and adhere more to his wise and judicious example with regard to it.

#### THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OR FACTORS OF THE "RITE VOCATUS" AS REQUIRED BY THIS ARTICLE.

But what, let us now ask, is this "call to the ministry," or this "*rite vocatus*," which is thus demanded by our Article? What are its constituent elements? In what does it essentially consist?

1. *This right call to the ministerial office consists, first of all, in the possession of the needed ministerial gifts and qualifications.*

We may assume, as an *a priori* truth, that God *calls* no one into the office of the ministry whom he has not beforehand *qualified* for that office. Having revealed in his word what gifts and qualifications a true bishop or pastor must possess, he would, in the very nature of the case, call those only who possess the gifts and qualifications thus required. Besides, the ministry being pre-eminently a

peculiar and special work, in its very nature unlike all other vocations, and hence requiring special and peculiar gifts and endowments, fitting a man for it, and necessary in order to render him happy and successful in it, we must take it for granted that God, by the Holy Spirit, calls no one to this special work without also conferring upon him the gifts and qualifications necessary for it. The very fact, therefore, that an individual is possessed of the special gifts and characteristics, designated in the Sacred Scriptures as qualifications for the ministerial office, is at once, in itself, an indication that possibly God wills him to enter that office. The conferring of the gifts is, in part at least, the "call." It is a divine revelation of the divine will concerning him; an intimation to him from heaven of what his life mission should be; a true voice of God calling to him, out of the very depths of his being, saying: "This is the way which I have marked out for thee—walk thou in it." Thus, indeed, God, in part at least, indicates to *every* man his providential mission in life. The purpose of God with regard to every human being is that he should glorify him and enjoy him forever. And hence, in the natural or constitutional endowments already of each one, and in the providential orderings and spiritual experiences of his life afterward, God fits one human being thus to serve and glorify him in one position or sphere of life, and another in a different position or sphere. And this providential designation of a man to a particular class of duties, or to some special employment or mode of life, is, on this very account, even in popular language, spoken of as his "calling." What a man is clearly and evidently *fitted* for, that also, men say, he is *called* to; and what he has no qualification or endowment for, that, they say, he is not called to. And so emphatic is our intuitive recognition of this truth that God designates men to their work in life, by the very talents he confers upon them or withholds from them, that when a man succeeds in whatever he undertakes, men instinctively say: "he has found his calling;" or, if he fails, they say: "he has mistaken his calling." In either case there is the clear recognition of this invisible, yet most positive thing, designated the man's "*calling*;" *i. e.* the will of God framing the man's being, and fitting him for some certain and especial sphere or mission in life, and the man either reading that will, and falling in obediently with it, and, by doing so, making life a success, or not reading it, and perpetually going counter to it, and, in consequence, making a failure of life.



Especially, or in the highest and fullest possible sense, is all this true with regard to a man's calling of God into the office of the ministry. By the gifts God confers upon him, by the fitness for the work which in any way he bestows upon him, God calls him to the work, and makes it his duty to assume and discharge it. In that striking and beautiful simile which the apostle uses in his epistle to the Romans, he likens the Church to the complex human body, in which the members not only differ from one another, while each is essential to the whole, but the office and functions of each, also, are determined by their individual fitness for their respective offices and functions. "Having then," is his language, "*gifts* differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation." (Rom. xii. 6-7.) And, in his letter to the Corinthians (I Cor. xii. 4), he expressly refers these personal gifts to the Holy Ghost as their author, and declares their express object or design to be to qualify those who are so gifted for their personal and respective duties. "Now, there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

As regards the office of the ministry, therefore, and as regards indeed all other offices and duties in the Church, these two points, from the word of God, are clear—viz. that the endowments or qualifications which men may possess for these respective offices are the gifts to them of God, and that they express, both to their possessor and to others in the Church around him, that the will of God is that he upon whom he has thus bestowed such gifts should exercise them also in the especial office or duty for which he is thus especially fitted. Or, in other words, the divine endowment of a man for

the ministerial office constitutes essentially the divine "call," also, to that office; and the will of God that a man should be in the office is expressed by the peculiar fitness which he gives him for it.

What these especial gifts and endowments, thus qualifying a man for the office of the ministry, and thus making it his duty to enter it and labor for God's glory in it, are, the word of God, as also the experience of the Church, clearly reveal. They divide themselves into three classes, viz. suitable natural endowments both of body and of mind, suitable training and education or discipline and development of these natural endowments, and then, as the crown of all, suitable spiritual qualifications, or the possession, in an eminent degree, of the fruit and unction of the Holy Spirit, sanctifying and consecrating both the natural endowments and the educational acquirements to the single and supreme object of glorifying God. The first, therefore, is the bestowal of God in creation, the second in providence, and the third in grace; each his gift, and each necessary to fit a man for the office. The "call" implies and includes them all.

*There must, first, be the necessary natural endowments, both of body and of mind.* There must be proper *bodily* qualification. It is extremely doubtful whether God calls a man with a defective or unhealthy body into the office of the ministry. Under the Old Testament no man who was maimed or blemished in any of his bodily members was allowed to enter the priest's office. "Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generation that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God. For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or anything superfluous, or a man that is broken-footed, or broken-handed, or crooked-backed, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy or scabbed; no man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire; he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God." (Lev. xxi. 17-21.) Of course I do not here forget that this requirement of bodily perfection existed in the office of the *priesthood*, and under the *Old Dispensation*, which was largely typical, and that the office concerning whose "call" we are speaking, is the office of the ministry under the *New* or Gospel Dispensation. And yet I also remember that in

each of these Old Testament requirements we have an expression, not simply of the divine will concerning the special thing to which the requirement applies, but an expression also of that will concerning the general subject or object with which that special requirement stands related or connected. The thing specific under the Old Dispensation was, the order of the priesthood, and the thing specific under the New Dispensation is the office of the ministry, but in both the thing general is public divine worship, and who shall be the official ministers or functionaries of that worship. A physical disqualification under the one dispensation, therefore, would, it seems to me, be equally a disqualification under the other dispensation.

But, apart from what the word of God may thus teach upon this subject, the duties and demands of the ministerial office are such that the successful and uninterrupted prosecution of it imperatively requires *bodily* soundness and vigor of a high order. Men in feeble health, and of frail physical constitution, like Baxter and Doddridge and Summerfield, have, of course, been eminently useful in the work of the ministry. And yet, with health and bodily strength how much more useful they would have been. How much work for Christ and souls, because of their limited strength, was necessarily left undone. How much, for the same reason, was feebly and unsatisfactorily done. And in how many such cases of feeble health, when the Church perhaps expended her means in educating the man for the ministry, and when he has perhaps barely entered upon it, he soon becomes utterly incapacitated, is compelled to relinquish his work, and speedily sinks into the grave. A sound, vigorous, healthful body is, then, an essentially important natural endowment which all who seek the office and work of the ministry should possess.

The same is true, even in a higher degree, of the *mental* endowments and capacities of those seeking this sacred office. These should always be of an high order. The ministry is a work which requires, in the nature of the case, a strong, vigorous mind. It demands a high order of native intellect. He is not called to the ministry whose capacity of thought, whose original endowments of reason and understanding, are not above the capacities and endowments with which men generally are by nature gifted. The minister is to be the student and interpreter to the people of God's word,

he is to be the leader of religious thought, he is to originate and mould public sentiment, he is to be the teacher and instructor of society, he is to be the head and governor of the church of which the Holy Ghost shall make him the overseer. Can such a position be properly filled by a man of ordinary mental power? Does not the full and successful discharge of such high duties demand also the possession of a high order of talent? Men of comparatively feeble natural ability have, I am aware, in spite of their feebleness, in some instances, been extensively useful; but even these, it must be admitted, often owe their usefulness more to certain favorable surroundings and helps than to their own personal endeavors. Besides, their usefulness is generally limited to certain peculiar localities, and to a certain class of minds and range of society of their own level, or even below their own level, but ceases, or is greatly diminished, when they are transferred to other and more cultured and thoughtful communities. And yet the Saviour bids his ministry to make the *world* their field, and hence requires that they should be fitted also to labor with success in any part of it.

The "call" to the office of the ministry includes, then, suitable natural endowments, both of body and of mind. Completeness and health of body; vigor and strength of mind; quickness and grasp in apprehension; soundness of judgment; stability in purpose; attractiveness in person; affability in address and manner; readiness and force in utterance; born leadership in the character of his whole being, both of body and mind—these are some of the gifts which God, in his very creation already, bestows upon the man whom he calls into the office of the ministry.

But, beside these *natural* endowments, which are the gifts of God by creation, there are, also, conferred upon all whom he calls into the ministerial office, *the additional endowment, secondly, of suitable education and training, or the discipline and development, by culture, of the mental capacities bestowed by creation.* Natural gifts alone are insufficient to meet fully, especially in this our day and land, the demands which are made upon the ministry. There must also be the additional endowment of culture, the development, the training, the discipline of the mental faculties into their highest possible measure or capacity of usefulness. Scholarship as well as talent, education as well as genius, attainments as well as endowments, are required by all who would be workmen in the office of the min-

istry, not needing to be ashamed, able rightly to divide the word of God. This has always been so. Moses, although naturally possessed of the highest order of genius, was nevertheless "learned, also, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." (Acts vii. 22.) The Apostles were during three years under the personal tuition of the Saviour himself before they were sent forth upon their ministerial work. Paul, the most useful of the Twelve, was also the best educated of the Twelve. "A well educated ministry of religion has always been the ordinance of heaven from the earliest records of history to the present hour. The educational provisions of the tribe of Levi, the schools of the prophets, the scribes and doctors of the law among the Jews, the personal training which Christ gave his apostles, the celebrated schools of the early Church, and the Universities and Colleges of later and present ages, all of which were expressly founded and designed for the suitable education of ministers, and often in the face of almost incredible difficulties, bear a most remarkable and unbroken testimony to the settled judgment of the Church on this point in all its dispensations." (*Considerations on a Call to the Ministry*, by the Rev. Dr. M. B. Hope, Professor in the College of New Jersey.) There have of course been some uneducated men who have yet been useful men. But such men are exceptions to the rule. God can, we admit, make an illiterate and uneducated man successful in the preaching of the word. With him all things are possible. Even a dumb ass, if he wills it, can be so made to speak that a prophet himself sitting upon it is instructed by it. But that does not prove that he wants only dumb asses to be his ministers. He may sometimes, for special reasons, depart from his general order or rule, and he may sometimes make ignorance serve his purpose; but if he does, he does it in spite of the ignorance, and by other factors beside and above the ignorance. God never uses ignorance itself as an element of ministerial success. God calls no man into the ministry *because* he is uneducated and ignorant. If such a man does find his way into the ministry, and chances to be useful, he is so despite his lack of education and despite his ignorance, and he would, under the same circumstances, if he were not ignorant, be vastly more useful. In all the past ages of the Church the men who have risen to the highest measures of usefulness, who have impressed themselves upon their generations for good, whose influence survived them and moulded the thought and life of generations



following, were educated men. And, if in any age in the world's history, God called only cultured and intelligent men into the office of the ministry, he does so now, in our age. Ours is an age of more than ordinary intelligence among the masses, an age of intense mental activity, an age of inquiry and investigation, an age of skeptical assault upon the very foundations of Christianity, an age in which unsanctified genius and scholarship are massed in deadly hostility against every essential doctrine of our most holy faith. At such a time especially, therefore, is a talented and learned ministry an absolute necessity. Now, when liberty all over our land is tending to licentiousness, and when infidelity and every possible system of false religion are stalking abroad and are impudently challenging the credentials and faith of the believer, it would surely be more than folly, it would be a crime, to entrust the defence and propagation of the faith to any other class of men than men of clear, strong, well-trained, and well-furnished minds. Now more than ever the Church demands a ministry which will "hold fast the faithful word, and be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers, for there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake." (Tit. i. 9-11). Now more than ever God calls only men possessed of thorough mental training into the office and work of the ministry. The "*rite vocatus*" never did include, and does not now include, the factor of ignorance.

And hence, also, our *Formula of Government and Discipline* very properly requires of all candidates for the ministry that their "examinations shall embrace *at least* the following subjects, viz.: 'Personal Piety, and the motives of the applicant for seeking the holy office, the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, the Evidences of Christianity, Natural and Revealed Theology, Church History, Pastoral Theology, the Rules of Sermonizing, and Church Government.'" This is as it should be. So much, at least, should in every case be required. It is, however, greatly to be regretted that this requirement of our "*Formula*," moderate as it is, is not always in our Synods enforced. In some of our Synods it is most flagrantly disregarded. Men from the ministry of other churches in which theological and scientific training for the ministry is not pretended, are slipped into the ranks of our ministry as easily and quickly as though

we pretended to such training as little as the churches from which such applicants come. And men from the membership of our own Church, with scarcely an education sufficient to secure them an appointment as teachers in the common schools of our land, are yet, by the solemn "laying on of the hands of the presbytery," received into the ministerial office, and sent forth as the accredited teachers of the Church of Christ. Like the conies, such men, send them where you will, are "a feeble folk." They are not called of God to the ministry. They cannot, in the nature of the case, wield an influence such as the ministry should command for good. They are objects of indifference to the masses, and of contempt to the thoughtful and intelligent, wherever they go. They degrade, in public estimation, the ministerial office; they weaken the influence of Christianity, whose representatives and defenders they assume to be; and they prove an injury and not a blessing to the church whose interests they have thus entrusted to them. By no possible stretch of charity can we believe that such men have the "*rite vocatus*," or the true call from God to enter the office of the ministry, and they should never, therefore, be admitted into it. And hence, in order to correct this evil, our General Synod owes it to the church as a simple matter of self-protection, and owes it to the cause of Christ as a simple matter of justice and of right, to insist upon the enforcement to the very letter, of the requirements, in this respect, of her own "*Formula*," and by the establishment of the same high standard of qualifications for admission in all her District Synods, and the establishment of better inter-synodical agreement and comity, so that whatever will exclude a man from admission into the ministry in one of our Synods will equally do so in every other, make it absolutely impossible for men, illiterate and unqualified, to receive licensure or ordination at her hands.

There is, however, another kind of training for the ministry beside this culture of the mind or training in the schools, which is a very important qualification, and very necessary in order to a man's greatest possible influence. I refer to the culture of personal habits; the training which will give to a man the ease and bearing of a thoroughly refined Christian gentleman. The minister is capable, if fitted for it, to wield an immense *social* influence and power. He can, by his taste and accomplishments, by his ease and grace in society, by his attractive air and manner, by the winning and pleasing

social qualities which he possesses, make himself a desirable and ever-welcome guest in every home in the community, can draw all with whom he thus comes in contact to himself, can especially win the young as his admirers and friends, and can thus gain a power for good which will be almost boundless. For, after all, as ministers we reach men, if we reach them at all, by this very thing of what we are to them personally and in the plane of our social relations to them. By this they are either repelled or attracted. By this they are either prepared or unprepared to be benefited by our public ministrations to them. And yet how many ministers there are whose training for their position is, in this respect, lamentably defective. It is a very delicate subject upon which to speak, and yet it may as well be spoken; but are there not men in the ministry of every church, possessed of fine natural ability, of able scholarship, and of undoubted piety, who nevertheless, simply because of their lack of social culture, their uncouthness, their boorishness, their coarseness, their lack of ease and grace in good society, their destitution of the refinement and taste, the self-possession and unaffected affability and suavity, which always characterize a man as a gentleman, cut themselves off from the influence for good which they would otherwise command, and fail to reach and win for Christ many whom otherwise they would reach and win? Looking at such men, the question has often forced itself upon my mind: Is there not something defective in our system of training for the ministry which neglects a factor of ministerial usefulness so important? Do we not in our Ministeriums, when men present themselves before us for induction into the sacred office, inquire too little into their fitness for the work, by this characteristic of their social qualifications? Are such men, after all, really called of God into the ministry? Does he want them there? Have they, indeed—ought they to have—the “*rite vocatus*?” Moses was not only a man of great learning, but he was a man, also, of courtly and refined manners. Paul constantly reveals himself to have been a thorough and elegant gentleman. Our Saviour must have been very easy and winning in his social intercourse and relations, else the common people would not, as they did, have heard him gladly; else the multitude would not have gathered so eagerly and intimately around him on every possible occasion, else he would not have been invited to dine, as he often was, in the house of proud Phari-

sees; else he would never have been the frequent and most welcome visitor in the house of Martha and Mary and Lazarus that he was. "Be courteous," is a scriptural injunction addressed to all Christians. Is it not especially addressed to ministers? Can we be as useful as the office of the ministry demands that we should be, without it? Does God call a man into the ministry who is thus socially unqualified for the ministry? These questions might, with profit, be pondered by many.

*Among the gifts, however, necessary above all others for the work, and without which God calls no one to the office of the ministry, is the gift of eminent personal piety.*

The validity of ministerial acts, it is true, does not depend upon the personal or subjective moral character of him who performs the acts. The sacraments, *e. g.*, have in themselves an inherent or objective efficacy. The word of God is still the word of God, even though proclaimed by one who has never experienced its power in his own heart. "Although," says our Augsburg Confession (Art. VIII.), "the Christian Church is properly nothing else than the congregation of all believers and saints, yet, as in this life there are many hypocrites and false Christians, open sinners remaining even among the pious, the sacraments, nevertheless, are effectual, even if the preachers by whom they are administered be not pious, as Christ himself says (Matt. xxiii. 2), "the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat." And the *Apology* (*De Ecclesia*, Art. VII. et VIII.) says: "Nor are the sacraments without efficacy because administered by unworthy and ungodly men; for they stand before us by virtue of the call of the Church, not on their own authority, but as representatives of Christ, who says (Luke x. 16): 'He that heareth you heareth me.' Thus Judas was also sent to preach. Now, although ungodly men preach and administer the sacraments, they officiate in Christ's stead. And this declaration of Christ teaches us that, in such cases, the unworthiness of the servant should not offend us."

And yet, whilst all that the Confessions thus teach is true, and whilst an ungodly man's ministerial acts may, notwithstanding his personal unworthiness, result in some measure of good because of what the word and sacraments are in themselves, nevertheless it is also true that God never *calls* ungodly men into the office of the ministry, nor, if they thrust themselves uncalled into it, does he



ever crown their labors with great or extensive spiritual results. God calls no one into the ministry whom he has not first called to be a Christian. Have whatever else he may, if he has not eminent personal piety, he has not the right call to the ministry. "God qualifies men for the office," says Dr. Wayland, "by making them disciples of Christ, his renewed and obedient children, heirs of everlasting life. We can never suppose that God would employ men who are his enemies, in rebellion against him, to persuade others to be reconciled to him; that is, to do what they steadfastly refuse to do themselves. Unless a man have within himself the evidence that he has been born again, he has no right to enter the ministry. And, on the other hand, unless a man give evidence, by a Christian life, that he is in heart a true disciple of Christ, no body of believers can without sin call him to the ministry." (*Wayland, The Ministry of the Gospel*, pp. 27, 28). "The first evidence," says another writer, "of a call to this high and holy office, is genuine piety. An elevated tone of piety, experimental and practical, consistent and controlling, active and glowing, is an essential requisite, absolutely indispensable to the faithful discharge of its appropriate duties. All the directions of inspiration enjoin or presuppose a pious heart, renewed by the Holy Ghost, baptized with the spirit of Jesus Christ, and brought completely under the sanctifying influences of divine truth. To the minister of the gospel are entrusted most momentous and solemn interests. He is commissioned to make known to men

"The eternal counsels, in his Master's name  
To treat with them of everlasting things,  
Of life, death, bliss and woe."

It is preposterous to expect a man to communicate, expound, enforce and apply the truths of the Bible, who has never felt their power in his own heart, who neither understands, believes nor loves them. How shall he testify of the sufficiency of the remedy proposed in the Gospel, unless he feel his own spiritual malady? How shall he awaken the careless sinner, if he himself is lulled into security? How shall he feed the flock of Christ, purchased with his precious blood, who has no interest in that purchase? How can he relieve the tempted, sympathize with the children of sorrow, bind up the broken-hearted, and comfort them that mourn, who has no experimental knowledge and no spiritual experience? How shall



he who has never realized, and, therefore, never felt, the pressure of his own sins, present the word "fitly spoken" to distressed and heavy-laden souls? How can he give to every one his portion in due season? How can he guide anxious and doubting souls? How can he show to the weary traveler the road which he himself has never traveled? The men, then, who fill the ministerial office, must be men of eminent piety; men of burning and untiring zeal; men whose hearts glow with the love of Christ; men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost; men who will not hesitate to do anything or suffer anything for Christ; men who will forsake even the comforts of refined society, and the endearments of home, and with their lives in their hands, go forth to the destitute settlements in our own country, or to the distant heathen, to preach the glad tidings of redemption to perishing sinners. The ministry adapted to the present state of the Church and of the world, must be characterized by a broken spirit before God, compassion for the souls of others, and an unction from the Holy Ghost. The piety needed must be so consistent and controlling, as to constantly influence the feelings and passions, the desires and volitions, the daily habits and enterprises of the individual. It must be so elevated and deep-toned as to pervade the soul, sweeten the temper, and lead daily to the faithful examination of the heart and to the entire consecration of the life to God." (*Ev. Review*, vol. xii., pp. 199-200.)

But, to sum up, and to show you in the clearest and fullest light what the character and piety are of a man fitted for the ministerial office, and truly called of God into it, let me yet quote the words of an old author, who was himself the highest human realization of a true Gospel minister that the world and the Church have ever seen. He writes as follows: "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop (ἐπισκοπῆς) he desireth a good work. A bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous, not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1 Tim. iii. 1-7). And let me also yet, in order to show you the godly spirit in which this grandest of human preachers prosecuted the work of the ministry, read you a quotation

from a farewell discourse which he delivered when he resigned the pastorship of the Church at Ephesus. "Ye know," is his language, "from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. (Acts xx. 18-27.)

Such now, in their three-fold character of natural endowment, of acquired culture, and of bestowed Christian character and grace, are the gifts which, according to God's word, and as taught by the experience of the Church, must be possessed, and always are possessed, by those who are the called of God to the office of the Gospel Ministry. The "*rite vocatus*" of our Article includes them all, and he who has not these "*gifts*" from God has not the "*call*" from God.

It should hardly be necessary to add, and yet it is, that the *subjects* or *persons* whom God thus, by the bestowal of this fitness for its duties, calls to the office of the ministry are always *men* and *not women*. In his word he emphatically forbids women to speak or preach in the churches of the saints. "Let your women keep silence in the churches," is his clear and unmistakable command, "for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And, if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church." (1 Cor. xiv. 34-35.) And again: "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection; but I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence; for Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression." (1 Tim. ii. 11-14.) Thus does God in his word, plainly and positively, forbid women to preach. Would he then now "*call*" them to what he has thus forbidden them to do? Besides, is not woman, in the very constitution of her physical being, and especially in the formation of her vocal organs and capacities,

unfitted for the work of preaching the word? Are not, also, the very instincts of her being, the innate modesty, the retiring diffidence of the nature with which God has endowed her, and which constitute both her charm and her power, all of which she must first do violence to before she can bring herself into willingness to assume a work so public and conspicuous, an abiding protest against it? Is it not all, as Horace Bushnell well styles it, "a reform against nature?" Is it not all in direct conflict with the divine purposes concerning woman as revealed in the Scriptures? "I will therefore," says God in his word, "that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." (1 Tim. v. 14.) Just as some Christian *men*, because disqualified and incapable rightly to discharge its duties, are not called of God to the office of the ministry, so, for the same reason, together with the additional reason that God wills woman to glorify him in the specific domain of home, no woman is called to the office of the ministry. (*Luther's Works, Erlangen Ed., Vol. 28, p. 50.*)

2. The "*rite vocatus*," or the right call to the ministerial office, consists in a clear and heartfelt conviction, wrought by the Holy Ghost in the individual's own consciousness, that it is the will of God that he should enter that office and labor in it for the divine glory.

I purposely here make use of the word "*conviction*," meaning by it the voice of conscience, and an inner and imperative sense of duty. A mere *preference* of the office and work of the ministry to any other vocation or calling in life; a mere *consent*, under the persuasion of friends, or because of the force of favorable circumstances, to enter it; a strong *desire* even, considered in itself alone, to fill that sacred position; all these are not sufficient evidences in themselves of a divine call. All these may exist, and the man still not be rightly called. The right inner call is something very different. It is more than mere willingness, or preference, or desire, or strong inner impulse. It springs purely from the domain of conscience. It comes with the force and dignity of an ethical imperative; a supreme moral obligation; an overwhelming and ineradicable sense of duty; all that, in its deepest and fullest sense, is expressed by the word *ought*. Many falsely regard themselves as possessing the divine call simply because they *feel* moved to become ministers, without for a moment inquiring into the origin or moral character of their feelings. The

mere fact that they have, no matter to them how it has been awakened, a *desire* to preach, is to them proof abundant that they are also *called of God* to do so. This desire, they assume, could have been awakened in them by the Holy Ghost only, and can be nothing less than the voice of the Holy Ghost saying to them that they are chosen of God to the work. As was noticed in the early part of our lecture, this was the notion concerning the call to the ministry which was held by the Anabaptists and by other fanatics in the days of the Reformation. It was the theory also of the entire School of Mystics. It is the theory which is now held by the Friends or Quakers. And it is the theory also upon which in all our different Protestant churches we too much proceed in determining the question whether or not a man is divinely called to the ministerial office. "Do you *feel* yourself called to preach the Gospel" is by many made the chief or decisive question, and if the candidate declares that he does thus feel, the matter is already largely settled. The candidate's own subjective impressions concerning himself are regarded as a kind of holy of holies, into which it would be irreverent or possibly criminal for any with doubts and questionings to enter. And many a young man decides to study for the ministry, and education societies decide to support him, and theological seminaries decide to receive him, and Synods decide to license or ordain him, and churches decide to elect him, not primarily, as they all should, because he possesses such scripturally defined ministerial gifts and graces as indicate the will of God in the case, but largely, if not sometimes altogether, simply because he declares that he feels himself inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to enter the ministry.

It is scarcely necessary to say that all this is very wrong. This exaltation of a mere subjective impression, or a mere desire, into an unquestionable and infallible oracle or expression of the divine will, has put many a man into the office of the ministry whom God did not call there, and whose induction into it resulted unhappily to himself and injuriously to the Church.

The mere desire to become a minister is in itself no proof of a divine call. That desire may be born of ignorance, or of vanity, or of ambition, or of indolence and love of ease, or of mere morbid excitement, or of regard to the wishes of others. It may spring from a thousand unsanctified and selfish sources. There may not be a single divine influence or factor of grace in it. In proof of this



how frequently is it not the case, and especially in times of religious awakenings, that young men feel inwardly moved or "called" to seek the office of the ministry, who most clearly have no fitness whatever for it, and who in a comparatively brief time not only lose the desire which they had for the ministry, but lose often their very profession of piety, and again go back into the world and into sin. How many, also, are there not to-day in the office who, by their inefficiency and perpetual lack of success, show beyond a doubt, no matter how strong may have been their feeling or desire for it, that that feeling or desire was not wrought in them by the Holy Ghost, and that they ran without having been divinely called or sent. On the other hand, also, how often is it not the case that those who are evidently most fitted for the ministry, and who are most clearly called of God into it, have yet but little or no desire to enter it, and who if they do enter it, do so at a sacrifice of their own personal predilections or preferences, and only from a deep-seated and solemn sense of obligation or duty. They are men in whose eyes the ministry is an office of the highest possible sanctity and responsibility, and for the right discharge of whose duties they feel themselves both utterly unworthy and incapable. And hence, as the will of God is more and more clearly revealed to them, and the conviction grows upon them that they are indeed divinely called to be ambassadors for Christ, there is within them an instinctive moral shrinking back from it, a pleading with God to be exempted from the assumption of such mighty responsibilities, and an asking tremblingly: "Lord, who am I that thou shouldst send me?" Thus Moses, and Jonah, and Jeremiah, were all without an "inner call" to their work, in the sense of a burning and irrepressible desire for it, and each of them assumed it only because God made it clear to their understanding and conscience that it was their duty to assume it. Neither of them *wanted* to be a minister of God. If left to their own personal preference and choice, not one of them would have been what they were called of God to be. "Oh, my Lord," was the plea of Moses, "I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant, but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue." (Exodus iv. 10.) "Ah, Lord God," cried Jeremiah, when the Lord came to him calling him to his prophetic work, "behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." (Jer. i. 6.) And when the "word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying: Arise, go



to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me," Jonah, instead of desiring the work thus divinely assigned him, "rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa, and he found a ship going to Tarshish, so he paid the fare thereof and went down into it to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." (Jonah i. 1-3.) Or as Bishop Simpson, in his Yale Lectures, correctly says: "There is not an instance in the Holy Writ where a true man was ever anxious to bear the divine message. He always shrank from it, hesitated, and trembled."

The existence, therefore, of a desire for the office of the ministry, even in a strong degree, is, in itself, no conclusive proof of a divine call. Such desire may exist where God has not spoken. Satan himself may, indeed, be its author; even as St. Paul teaches, when he says: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor. xi. 13-15.) And how, it might here pertinently be asked, *could* Satan use a man to greater advantage in hindering and injuring the Church and cause of Christ than simply by calling him, if bad, or even only weak and unqualified, into the responsible office of the ministry? How intensified, when once in the ministry, his influence for harm and evil!

This inner call of God, the subjective impression made by the Holy Ghost, the "*rite vocatus*" from above, and not from beneath, is not, then, a mere sentiment or emotion, no mere desire or impulse, no mere preference or persuasion, but it is a calm, rational conviction of duty. It grounds itself in the personal conscience. It is begotten by the Spirit of God in the sacred retreat of the individual consciousness. It is the deep-seated sense of the soul that it is the will of God that it should seek to enter the office. -It is wholly what *God* wills in the matter, and not what the man *himself* wills. It is, in a word, the conviction, rising up in his consciousness into certainty, that God has qualified, or will qualify, him for the work of preaching the Gospel, and calls him to it; and that, no matter what *his* choice of a life-work might have been, *God's* choice for him is the ministry, and that only at the very peril of his soul's

salvation can he decline to do what God thus bids him do. At first, indeed, this conviction may be very faint. He comes probably into this consciousness of what is his duty gradually. As he contemplates the perishing condition of the world, as he prays from day to day "Thy kingdom come," as he reads more and understands better the word of God, as he learns better what are the scriptural qualifications necessary for the ministry, as he studies and knows himself more and finds that God has conferred these needed gifts even upon him, as he has suggested to him by others the thought that possibly God desires him in the ministry, as he grows in strength of Christian character and in willingness in any and every way possible to be guided and used by God in whatever service he may choose for him, and prays to have in all things no will but God's will—as he does all this, the conviction that he is called of God to the office of the ministry dawns upon him, grows on him, expands gradually into greater clearness and positiveness, settles down, at last, upon his conscience as a sure call from God, and causes him, in the spirit of loving obedience and of filial subjection, to say as said Isaiah the prophet, "Here am I, send me," (Isaiah vi. 8,) or as said Paul the apostle, "Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 16.)

And thus is there in every true call to the ministry, not as constituting in itself the call, but simply as a precursor or concomitant of it, and moral means of preparation for it, this conviction in the subject himself that he is called of God to the work. This it is that moves him humbly to present himself to the church, whose is the power of the keys, for her judgment in his case, and to receive at her hands the outward or true call. And hence in the Episcopal church, in the ordination of deacons, the bishop demands of the candidate, "*Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and ministry, to serve God for the promotion of his glory and the edifying of his people?*" And the candidate must answer, "*I trust so.*" In the ordination service of our own church, the candidate is asked, "*Do you believe that in seeking the ministerial office, you are influenced by a sincere love to God, your Saviour, and desire to promote his glory.*" (Formula, chap. xix., sec. 2, 4.)

In harmony, also, with all this are the views of our great Lutheran

dogmaticians. For whilst they are always most emphatic in their condemnation of an "inner call," in the fanatical and unscriptural sense in which it was held by the Anabaptists, Schwenkfeldians, Weigelians, Quakers, and others, denying the need of any outward call by the word and the church, and making this subjective impulse in itself the supreme and only necessary call, they nevertheless admit and clearly teach that there is such a thing as an inner inspiration or divinely wrought impression, in the consciousness of those whom God has gifted or qualified for the ministerial office, moving them to seek entrance into it, and causing them to feel that by laboring faithfully in it they will be able to do most for his glory.

Gerhard, *c. g.*, (*De Min. Ecc.*, sec. 75) says:

"We grant that God, by an inner impulse and inspiration, breathes into some this disposition to undertake the ministry of the church, without regard to dangers or difficulties; to which belongs, also, that mysterious impulse by which some are drawn to the study of theology. We also grant that it is absolutely required of the minister that he be not allured either by ambition, or avarice, or any other wicked desire, but that induced by the pure love of God, and the desire of edifying the church, he should accept the ecclesiastical office offered him; and if any one desire to apply, in a proper sense, the name of secret call to these dispositions, both of which are especially worthy of praise, we do not greatly object. Yet, in the mean time, we give the warning that, in order that the doors be not opened to the disturbances of the Anabaptists, or the revelations of the enthusiasts, no one, by reason of this secret call, ought to take upon himself the duties of the ministerial office, unless there be added to it the outward and solemn call of the church."

Chemnitz (iii. p. 119) on 1 Tim. iii. 1, says:

"To desire the office of a bishop is not without a lawful call to take upon yourself ministerial functions; but he who understands the foundations of heavenly doctrine, and is to a certain extent endowed with the gift of teaching, in offering his labor to God and the church, by this very act seeks for nothing else than that God by a lawful call may declare whether, when, and where he wishes to use his ministry in the Church. And such a one ought to be endowed with such a mind that, if a lawful call should not follow this petition, he would not take it upon himself, but would say with David (2 Sam. ii. 26), 'But, if he thus say, I have no delight

in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.'"

In the "*rite vocatus*," or the regular call to the ministerial office, as demanded by this Fourteenth Article of the Augsburg Confession, there is, then, a subjective impression or inner conviction, wrought by the Holy Ghost in the conscience of the individual, moving him to seek the office and anointing him, as it were, beforehand with spiritual fitness for it, but which nevertheless is not in itself the call, and is not his true and final divine commission to preach the word and to administer the sacraments, or to assume and discharge the duties of the ministerial office. That true divine call is given, not thus directly and immediately, but indirectly and mediately, through the Church to which Christ has delegated his power. Hence:

3. *The "rite vocatus," or the right call to the ministerial office, in its essential and highest form of expression, consists in the official recognition by the Church, in her exercise of the power of the keys, of the possession on the part of the person seeking the office, of those special gifts and graces required in the word of God as qualifications for the office of the ministry, and the public and solemn induction of him by the rite of ordination, because of his possession of such special gifts and graces, into the ministerial office.*

In Article VII. of our Confession the Church is defined to be "the congregation of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel." (See also *Apology* VII.)

To the Church thus defined belongs the right of calling into the ministerial office. This right to "call" is hers, because to her has been committed by the Saviour the "Power of the Keys" (*Potestas Clavium*). "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 19). "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." (John xx. 23.)

What this "power of the keys" is, we find admirably explained in our Confessions. The Augsburg Confession (Art. XXVIII., *Of the Power of the Bishops or Clergy*), says: "Accordingly they teach that the power of the keys or the bishops, according to the gospel,



is a power and commission from God to preach the gospel, to remit and to retain sins, and to attend to and administer the sacraments. For Christ sent forth the Apostles with the command: 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.' This power of the keys, or of the bishops, is to be exercised and carried into effect alone by the doctrine and the preaching of the word of God, and by the administration of the sacraments, to many or to a few persons, according to the call. For by this means are conferred, not temporal, but eternal blessings and treasures; as eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. These blessings cannot be obtained otherwise than by the office of the ministry, and by the administration of the holy sacraments."

The *Apology*, also (XIV., *Of the Power of the Church*), says: "But we are speaking of true Christian bishops; and we are pleased with the old division, namely, that the power of the bishops consists in *potestate Ordinis* and *potestate Jurisdictionis*, i. e., in the administration of the sacraments, and in spiritual jurisdiction."

Now, this "power of the keys," the Saviour, as head of the Church, has given not as the Romish doctrine upon this point claims, to the popes nor to the bishops, as a separate and superior order, but to the *Church*, as the whole congregation or body of Christian believers. As is also declared in the *Appendix to the Smalcald Articles*: "To this point the declarations of Christ pertain, which show that the keys are given to the whole Church, and not simply to some particular persons; as the text says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii. 20.) And as Gerhard also (*De Min. Ecc.*, 87), writes: "Cuicunque claves regni cœlorum ab ipso Christo sunt traditæ, penes eum est jus vocandi ecclesiæ ministros. Atque toti ecclesiæ traditæ sunt a Christo claves regni cœlorum. Ergo penes totam ecclesiam est jus vocandi ministros."

In what *sense*, however, precisely, the Saviour has thus given the keys to the whole Church, whether immediately or mediately, whether he has given them to her as a pure democracy, having in herself, in her collective capacity and directly, the authority to exercise their power, or whether he has done so only mediately, through the ministry, which as his ambassadors he has placed in the Church to



act as part of her and for her, and yet in his name as King and Head to be spiritually over her—all this has long been a subject of dispute. Some, as is well known, take the position, and we think correctly, that “the church or congregation has the keys, not *immediately*, but *mediately*, in the word of God and in the holy office of the ministry.” Thus Grabau and many others bearing the Lutheran name, and devoted to the Lutheran polity and doctrine in their most conservative and churchly aspect, earnestly maintain. “If it now be said,” writes Grabau (quoted by Dr. C. A. Hay, in *Evangelical Review*, Vol. XXI., p. 617), “that this special ecclesiastical authority is given by Christ to his *Church* upon earth, nothing more is intended than that it was instituted in the gospel and set up *in* the Church by ordinary means through the efficacy of the gospel in the form of the *office of bishop or preacher*.” And again: “In this house of God now there are the keys of Christ through means of the gospel *and the office of the ministry*, not because they have their origin there, but because that is the appropriate spiritual theatre where they can exhibit their power for the consolation and salvation of souls, and be thus *put to use*. And in *this* sense the Smalcald Articles say that the keys are given to the whole Church.”

But, admitting that the power of the keys, whether mediately or immediately, has been given by Christ to the *Church*, three questions may now be pertinently asked, each of which, if correctly answered, will help us into a clearer and better apprehension of our subject, viz.:

When, or in what act, does the Church lawfully exercise this her *jus vocandi*, or right of calling?

Through whom does she lawfully and properly perform this act?

And what is the precise import or character of the act which she thus performs?

*First. When, or in what act, does the Church lawfully exercise this, her jus vocandi, or right of calling?*

Does she do it in the election of a man as its pastor by a single congregation before his ordination, or does she do it in the act of his ordination before his election? Does the election precede the ordination, or does the ordination properly precede the election? Is he elected because he has been ordained, or is he first ordained in order that he may subsequently be properly elected? In a word, does the act of the separate congregation in choosing him to be its

pastor place him in the ministerial office, or does the ordination by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery or Ministerium place him there? Is the voice of the Church, in other words, heard in the voice of the congregation, or in the voice of the Synod or Ministerium, representing many congregations, and expressing the more general opinion or judgment of the Church in the matter?

It is well known that Luther held to the view that election, and not ordination, constituted the true outward or mediate call of the Church into the office of the ministry. He taught that whenever and wherever a congregation of believers, whether their number be large or small, are associated together in the use of the word and sacraments, and choose or elect one to preach to them that word and administer to them the sacraments, the one thus elected is by that act of election made a minister, or truly and really placed in the ministerial office, and is thus as truly in the office as though he had been ordained by the hands of bishops. The *election* is the "call," and the ordination is merely the subsequent declaration or recognition of the fact that there has been such a "call." (*Vide Luther's Letter to the Senate and People of Prague, in 1523.*)

The Appendix to the Smalcald Articles also expresses this view. "The common usages of the Church," it declares, "likewise prove this: for in former times the people elected clergymen and bishops; then the bishops living in or near the same place, came and confirmed those elected by the laying on of hands; and at that time ordination was nothing else than this approbation." (*Book of Concord, Eng. trans., p. 401. Also Dr. Walther's "Kirche und Ampt," pp. 248-255.*)

But, however much we all revere the name of Luther, and incline to yield our judgment to his, this view which he thus held that in the congregation itself was divinely vested the *jus vocandi*, and that an election of a man as its pastor by a congregation, constituted a *rite vocatus* and placed such an one legitimately in the office of the ministry, does not at all commend itself to us. It is, we modestly dare to assert, in its entire conception, essentially wrong, and, if practically carried out, would necessarily lead to disastrous results.

It assumes, first of all, that an individual congregation, though it consists of but two or three persons, is the Church. On the contrary, the Church is "the congregation of *all* believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments are

administered according to the Gospel." (*Aug. Con.*, Art. VII.) "The Church," says Schmid, "is the *Kingdom* in which Christ exercises his dominion; and hence many dogmaticians append the doctrine concerning the Church to that concerning Christ as the sovereign in his empire." (*Doctrinal Theology*, p. 602.) "The inner and essential form of the Church," says Hollazius, "consists in the spiritual union of true believers and saints who, as members of the Church, are bound together with Christ the Head, through true and living faith, which is followed by a communion of mutual love." The individual congregation, therefore, having the pure word and sacraments, is part of the true Church, and there the Church truly is, but it is not in itself thus alone the Church. A part is never the whole, and should never be regarded as the whole.

Again: this view is based upon extravagant notions of the rights and powers in the case of an individual congregation. Being but part of the whole, it cannot rightfully do anything which affects the whole, without the consent and co-operation of the whole. "The individual congregation," says Prof. Worley, "while it has for itself all the rights and immunities of the Church, is not the Church, and has no authority to act for other congregations or for the Church in general. Congregations sustain to the Church universal about the same relations which individual members do to the congregation. No individual Christian in the exercise of his scriptural rights in the congregation can act for others, or by his own will can determine and act for the congregation; yet he enjoys for himself all the rights and privileges which pertain to the congregation. And so while a congregation may enjoy and claim for itself, and even under particular circumstances perform for itself, all which appertains to the Church at large, no congregation can dictate or legislate or perform any function pertaining to the Church at large, for other congregations or for the whole Church. All those offices of a general nature, which have regard to promoting and securing the welfare and upbuilding of the whole Church, are of this nature, and can only be properly performed by the Church in her representative capacity, an essential and the only steadfast element of which is the holy ministry." (*Evangelical Review*, Vol. XV., pp. 317, 318.)

Again: this theory that the right to call is vested in the individual congregation, and that the election of a man to be pastor of such congregation, is the true call of the Church and puts him into

the ministerial office, assumes that the Church, in the true order of events, precedes the ministry, and creates or calls the ministry into existence only as she herself has need of a ministry. But it seems to us clear, beyond room for doubt, that precisely the reverse of all this is true. Instead of the Church preceding the ministry, the ministry precedes the Church, and by the preaching of the word creates and perpetuates the Church. Instead of the office being thus the result of mere human convenience for the orderly and profitable enjoyment of the word and sacraments in and by the Church, it is a separate and divinely established institution, whose field is the world, and whose commission authorizes those filling it to go anywhere as the accredited ambassadors of Christ. And instead of each separate congregation thus exercising the power of the keys and entrusting men with the holy office of the ministry, the Church at large, composed of many congregations, acting in a representative capacity, alone, except in case of necessity, should do it. To the Church in her official and organic oneness is the power given to call men into the ministry, and this calling does not create the office but merely fills it. Christ himself is its author, and it is he who, through the Church, acting in her organic capacity in his stead, says to all who rightly enter the sacred office: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, Amen." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

But again: The theory under consideration has, we are satisfied, if rightly considered, the weight and authority of the apostles and the early Church, also against it. We know full well that in those early days of Christianity, in many cases no doubt, the election by the congregation preceded in the order of time the act of ordination by the apostles and by others; and under the circumstances no other order could then well have existed. The Church then was in its merely formative state. The great truths and facts of Christianity, as taught by the Saviour during his ministry, and as they occurred and were made known during the Week of Passion and on the day of Pentecost, were carried by the thousands who had come up to Judea and Jerusalem, and afterward by others whom the persecution which arose scattered abroad, into all parts of the world. And, as the result, men and women were won to the truth which

they thus heard; converts were rapidly made; churches everywhere sprang quickly into existence; the persons in these churches best qualified were naturally chosen to serve as pastors; and afterward when these churches were visited by the apostles, these men whom the churches had thus chosen as their pastors were the ones, of course, whom at the request of the churches, the apostles ordained. It was altogether the best, and indeed the only order which then could be pursued. But whilst all this is true, does not the very fact that they, under such circumstances, ordained at all, clearly show that the election by the church was not, in their judgment, a true induction into the office of the ministry, and that the voice of the churches which had thus chosen them was by no means final in the case, but was submitted for final decision to the apostles and to the ministry whom they had ordained, as the highest official representatives of the whole Church? If upon examination, the apostles had discovered that one thus presented to them for ordination was unqualified for the work of the ministry to which he had been chosen by the congregation, they, of course, would have refused to ordain him, and in consequence he would not have been in the ministerial office, even if the Church, defiant of apostolic authority, would still have retained him as their religious teacher or pastor. So that the election, going before ordination, was the result of the peculiar condition in which the Church then, in its incipient or inchoate state, was, and was not designed therefore to be the order of filling the office of the ministry in after times or now. Even then already, no doubt, ordination, in some cases, was administered where there had been no election to become the pastor of some special church, but where the person or persons ordained were by ordination simply placed in the office and commissioned to go wherever the Providence and Spirit of God might lead them, preaching the word. Thus Paul and Barnabas were set apart, by the laying on of the hands of the other teachers or ministers at Antioch, for the special missionary work upon which they then departed. (Acts xiii. 2-4.) There is no proof that Timothy, when, "with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," he was ordained, was ordained as the pastor of some special church, but simply that by ordination he was brought into the ministerial office, and thus fitted to receive election as pastor. The same is true, also, of Titus. There is no absolute or certain proof that he was ordained to the exclusive and special work in the



island of Crete. Paul merely says: "For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." (Tit. i. 5.) And this command which Paul thus gives him, as he also gave Timothy (2 Tim. ii. 2), to "ordain elders in every city," does not necessarily require that we believe or suppose that these elders or ministers thus ordained had all previously been elected by the people as their pastors. They may have been. There is simply no proof that they were.

And hence, in view of all this, whilst in no case recorded in the New Testament was a pastor ever placed over a congregation without the full consent and desire of its members, yet this desire and consent, we are satisfied, even if expressed in a formal choice or election, in no instance was regarded as the call into the ministry, but this call was always regarded as being given in ordination. The laying on of the hands of the apostles or presbytery was the act by which the Church, in the name of her ascended Lord and Head, gave the *rite vocatus*.

There are still other objections to this theory of thus making the election the call, and of thus reducing ordination to a mere empty ceremony.

It begs the question with regard to ordination, declaring it to be an unnecessary and useless form merely of approving by the Church at large what the individual congregation has done, which is, indeed, the very point at issue or in dispute.

It is in direct conflict also with the conception of *unity* as an attribute of the true Church of Christ, and, by thus giving to each congregation the right to exercise the power of the keys and to admit men to the office of the ministry, it makes the Church no longer "one Holy Catholic Church," but a mere multiple of separate and independent churches.

Again: it places the power of deciding upon the qualifications of candidates for the ministry in the hands of those, in the nature of the case, least able wisely and well to decide upon them; for who will claim that there is in the churches that measure of scriptural intelligence and discriminating knowledge of the ability and fitness demanded in the ministry, which would make it safe or right to submit to popular vote the question of who shall and who shall not constitute the ministry? (*Ev. Review*, vol. xi., p. 323). Practically carried out,

and literally executed, it is a theory which would, we feel sure, so degrade and lower the standard of ministerial qualification and efficiency, and so involve the Church in peril from within herself, as to render her utterly weak and defenceless against her foes, and imperil her very being.

And so evident is this, that even those who hold to this view that with the congregations rests the right to call, and who strenuously insist upon it as the correct theory concerning the ministerial call, nevertheless do not absolutely and rigidly adhere to it in practice. Among our Missouri Lutheran brethren, *e. g.*, for whom I am sure I cherish the profoundest Christian regard, when a congregation becomes vacant, instead of acting for itself in strict independence, and instead of electing, without consultation or regard for synodical authority, either one of its own number or another from abroad, as its pastor, as a rule, first of all, it applies to the President of the Synod, who, in his official position, expresses for the time being the judgment of the Church general in so far as it is represented in the Synod, and whomsoever he names and commends to them as possessing suitable ministerial gifts, and as worthy of their confidence and suffrage, the congregation elects; the very thing in substance which is done among us when in Ministerium we ordain a man and thus commend him to the churches, and when subsequently a church, having confidence in the recommendation thus given, chooses him to be its pastor. In both cases the judgment of the ministry, and not that of the congregation itself, determines the choice.

But, yet another very serious objection to the theory we are combating lies in the view of the ministerial office itself which it necessitates and assumes. As it appears to us it virtually abolishes the office. Accepting the view that the source of the objective or outward call is the individual or local church, instead of the Church Catholic as the body of Christ, and assuming that it does consist in the temporary transfer, for the mere sake of order and propriety in public worship, of the priestly functions and rights possessed by all the members as part of the universal priesthood, to the one whom they thus choose to be their pastor, there can be no such thing as a separate, divinely-instituted, and divinely-perpetuated ministerial office, and what is called the ministerial office is merely a nice and convenient human arrangement. Under such an order of things there is no office of the ministry at all.

Then a man, if a pastor, is a minister, and if not a pastor he is not a minister. Then he is in the ministry to-day, and out of it to-morrow. Then the ministry exists only while performing ministerial acts. Then ordination, if proper and necessary once, is equally proper and necessary, and should be repeated, at each change of pastoral field. Then men who have been ordained as pastors, and afterwards become missionaries in heathen lands, or professors in our colleges and seminaries, or editors of our ecclesiastical journals, are no longer in the ministerial office, but sustain to the Church the mere relation of laymen. Surely this is no proper conception of the office. Men whom God has called to the office are not thus called into it or dropped out of it by the mere existence or non-existence of actual pastoral relations. On the contrary, the office exists by divine institution in the Church. The call, based upon suitable qualifications, uttered by the Holy Ghost in the conscience of the subject, and recognized and solemnly declared by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery as the organ of the Church in her corporate or official capacity, places the man in the office; and in that office he *abides*, remains a minister and not a layman—whether a pastor or not—until by death, or by the same authority by which he was instrumentally placed in it, he is removed from it. And hence the election of a man to be the pastor of a church, instead of thereby making him a minister, or putting him into the ministerial office, is simply, if done rightly, the expression on the part of that church of their belief that he is, by virtue of his ordination, a true minister, and that as such they choose him to be their pastor. His ordination was his call; and now their election of him as pastor is a providential indication to him of the special field where God wishes him to exercise his ministerial gifts.\*

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\*“The word of God and our Book,” says Dr. Hodge, “teach that the right to rule, to preach, to administer the sacraments, and to ordain, belongs to every minister by virtue of his office. If a man is ordained a presbyter, he has, by authority of Scripture, all these rights; and he cannot be deprived of the one any more than of the others. He has indeed no right to exercise his authority either to preach or to rule in a particular congregation without their consent; but their election no more makes him a ruler than it makes him a preacher. \* \* \* To say that a man cannot be a presbyter except in virtue of his connection with a particular Church, is as much as to say a man cannot be a physician without a prescribed number of patients, or a captain if not in actual command of a ship, or a general unless when at the head of a brigade. Owen con-

Luther's views are, of course, as we have already said, directly opposed to the position which we have thus taken. And yet in our interpretation of his views, both justice to him and to the truth requires that we should well consider the special character of the conflict which Luther was then waging, and the necessity which was then laid upon him, in the prosecution of his reformatory work, to emphasize sharply, and to defend jealously, individual and congregational Christian rights over against the hierarchical despotism of Rome, which denied to the people the privilege of choosing spiritual shepherds, and withheld from them the preached word and sacraments in their completeness and purity. In the emergency and necessity thus laid upon him, and as the best possible weapon which he could use against the crushing tyranny which the Papacy was then exercising over the Church, he revived the long-forgotten doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers, exhibited and defended it with all the force and vigor of his strong and enthusiastic nature, and made a practical application of it as a remedy for then existing evils, which possibly the exigency of the times demanded, and in doing which he undoubtedly acted with the utmost sincerity, but which, nevertheless, in the normal and established condition of Protestantism, now and since Luther fought and won his great battle, is not needed and cannot safely be practiced. As Dr. Plitt (*Einleitung in die Augustana*, vol. ii., pp. 374-376), correctly says: "He so strongly emphasized that the official action was identical with the individual action of every Christian in order to oppose the haughty spirit of the Romish officials, who were exalting themselves above all others, declaring their action to be sacramental, and trying to rule over the whole Church." And again: "In order to cut off all possible false inferences and conclusions, we must not forget that Luther was brought to this sharp emphasizing of the rights of the

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sistently carries out this doctrine, and maintains that as no man can be a bishop or presbyter, but in relation to a particular congregation, no Church has a right to ordain a man to preach to the heathen (Works, vol. xx., p. 457). When a theory comes to such an issue, it may fairly be assumed to have broken its neck. In the Apostolic Church all ministers ruled. They met together with the apostles and brethren to decide important questions; they formed churches and ordained elders; and yet not one in ten of those ministers was a pastor, or sustained any special or permanent relation to any particular church. Presbyterians do not believe that Timothy was the pastor of Ephesus, or Titus the bishop of Crete." (*Church Polity*, pp. 267-268).



individual congregation, *by the then existing times*. It was a time of great distress in the Church. The official representatives of the Church were not willing to fill the office in the individual congregations with preachers of the pure truth. They abused their right of calling a person into the office to the damage of the Church, while there were in the congregation believing members of the Church, or evangelical Christians. This was the condition of things which demanded peculiar advice and extraordinary measures. And in view of this Luther wrote: "As a Christian congregation must not and cannot be without the word of God, it is evident that they must also have teachers or preachers proclaiming that word." (*Walch.*, xxii., 146.) Every individual Christian has the right, and it is his duty, *should necessity urgently demand it*, to act as teacher. How much more, then, is it right that a whole congregation call one to this office, *if need be*, as is at all times, and especially now, the case. It is the duty of the individual congregation to fill the office, regardless of others, *in case of necessity*. Luther always adds this, and in calling for such (congregational) action, he never forgets to emphasize that the congregation concerned should examine itself whether it stands firm in the faith, and thus have a good conscience with regard to the action which it thus performs. Being assured of this, it can cheerfully act as in the name of God."

The one essential thing, then, in Luther's estimation, was the preaching of the pure word of God and the right administration of the sacraments. This constituted the Church. To this the Church was entitled. And hence, *in case of necessity*, and where those having the power of appointing or ordaining ministers for the Church abuse their power, and seek to place over the churches pastors who will withhold the pure word and sacraments from them, there, under such circumstances, and as a final and only remedy for such evils, each congregation, upon the strength of the spiritual priesthood to which every baptized member belongs, shall choose or elect for itself a pastor, and such election, even without ordination, shall be and is a true call of the one thus chosen to the office of the ministry. And evidently all that Luther aimed at, in all that he says with regard to the right of a congregation to call into the office of the the ministry, was to preserve the churches from having unworthy and false teachers imposed upon them against their consent. They had, he claimed, the essential right to say who should, and who



should not, be their pastors. And the question primarily was not so much whether election was the call, as whether there existed the right with the people to elect; and only in order to vindicate this congregational right to elect was he led, upon the ground of the universal priesthood of believers, to take the position that, in case of necessity, such election, even without ordination, was a valid and true call. "We do not say," is the language of the Wittenberg theologians, "that the Romish method of calling pastors is in every particular wrong, in that the bishops ordain ministers; but we cannot approve their course in placing pastors over churches without the knowledge or consent of the people, because, according to the old saying, 'The calling of a pastor, without the consent of the people, is null and void.'" (*Quoted by Dr. Dichl, Luth. Diet, 1877, p. 305*).

That Luther did not, in thus seeking to defend his position over against the tyrannical claims of Rome, often press too far his doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers, and of the office of the ministry as the result merely of the delegated or deputed rights of the many to the few who, for the sake of order in worship, were to conduct the public services and act as pastors, we are not willing to maintain. On the contrary, we believe that he did, and that the office of the ministry, as we have already said, has an infinitely higher origin, is *divine* in its source, and exists as a distinct and divinely perpetuated ordinance in the Church. The doctrine of a spiritual priesthood is undoubtedly a precious truth, and in electing a man as their pastor, the members of a church do, as Luther taught, delegate to him the exercise in public worship of their priestly functions, but in doing so they do not put him into the office of the ministry, but simply into a pastoral care over themselves; for the Church, not as a mere fragment or part, but in her organic and representative whole, has the power of the keys. "The office of teaching and administration is the glory of the Church's organization, and while it takes away from the spiritual priesthood none of its special glory, neither does it borrow its light and authority therefrom. There is a spiritual priesthood; but distinct from it, yea, going before it, is the office of reconciliation, for whose perpetuation the Head of the Church has made special preparation and instituted a certain order." (*Ev. Review*, vol. xi., p. 339.) And even Luther himself, in his late writings, reveals, if not a decided change, at least a great modification of his earlier views

upon this whole subject of the relation between the Christian priesthood of believers and the office of the ministry. Instead of regarding the office of the ministry as the product merely of the delegated rights and functions of fellow Christians as equal priests, he evidently conceived it, more and more distinctly, as an ordinance of God, and as an office in the Church and for the Church, but still not essentially of the Church. It is true, he nowhere in a formal manner retracts his earlier views and expressly declares that his opinions have changed, but, as has been clearly shown by those who have specially examined his writings in this respect, it is yet simply a fact that Luther, in his later years, assumed substantially a different position in regard to the relation of the universal priesthood to the ministerial office, from the position which he so tenaciously maintained in his earlier years. He more and more came to relinquish his theory of delegation of priestly rights and duties by the many to the one, as the source and establishment of the office, and conceived it more and more as a distinct and purely *divine* office, founded by Christ, and filled by the apostles and their successors, in regular and unbroken ministerial succession. (See "*Luther on the Office of the Ministry*," translated from the German of Dr. A. W. Dieckhoff, by Rev. Prof. Martin *Ev. Review*, vol. xxi., p. 182.)

Thus receding, with his advancing years, from his earlier views with regard to the relation between the universal priesthood of believers and the office of the ministry, Luther, we may now add, must also, logically and necessarily, have receded from the position that the call to the ministry is rightly given through or by the individual congregation, and is limited in the exercise of its functions to the congregation, but must, more and more clearly, have gradually come to see that such a call can lawfully be given only in ordination, by the laying on of the hands of the Ministerium as the official and authoritative organ and expression of the Church universal as the Body of Christ.

The answer then, in view of all that has been said, to the question, "*When, or in what distinct act, does the Church lawfully exercise her *jus vocandi*, or right of calling?*" at which we arrive, is this: The Church thus exercises lawfully her right of calling, or, by virtue of the power of the keys which she possesses, gives the true call to the office of the ministry, not in the act of election by an individual

congregation, but in the solemn act of *ordination* by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, or of those who *represent* and *act for* the Church in her Catholic unity and entirety as the corporate and unbroken Body of which Christ is the universal and ever-living divine head. Ordination gives the call, and the call which is thus given is the only true outward call into the ministerial office which the Church either does or can give. Election, on the other hand, when rightly and properly effected, is simply the choice, on the part of a congregation, of one who by ordination is already in the office, as its pastor, in order that he may in that relation exercise the functions of the office with which he had by ordination been entrusted. Ordination, therefore, except in cases of extremity or necessity, in the order of time comes first, and election comes after. Ordination gives the office; election gives the opportunity for the proper and lawful exercise of the office. Ordination makes a man a minister of the Gospel; election recognizes him as such, and invites him to his official work because he is a minister.

Having thus answered our *first* question, "When, or in what special act, does the Church lawfully exercise her right of calling?" we proceed to the discussion of our second, viz :

*Through whom does the Church lawfully and properly perform this act, or give this call to the ministerial office?*

Assuming, as we have tried to prove, that *ordination* is the special act in which induction into the ministerial office occurs, or in which the Church gives the call, the question now arises, by *whom* is this ordination to be administered? Through whom, as participants in the act, does the Church thus give the call? Is this ordinance of inducting into the office administered wholly by those in the office, or are others also to join with the ministry in its administration? In a word, by whom does the Church, in the act of ordination, express her judgment, and give the call to the office of the ministry?

I use the word "*ordination*," in this connection, in its widest sense, including the examination of the candidate, the decision with regard to his qualification or fitness for the office, and then the solemn ceremony or act itself, consisting in the "laying on of hands" according to apostolic practice.

As is well known, there are, even among those who hold that the call should be given, not by an individual Church, but by the Church general in her representative or corporate capacity, differ-

ent opinions as to the persons by whom properly this act of thus ordaining or inducting into the ministerial office should be performed. The one theory or opinion regards the ministry, or those in the ministerial office, the "*Ordo*" itself, as the only proper agent for its legitimate and right performance. The other theory or opinion regards the ministry *and* the laity, in joint synodical relation, as the proper agent or instrument by which the induction into the sacred office should be made. The one theory expresses itself in the "Formula of Government," framed by our fathers, in the words which declare: "The *Clergy* shall then hold a meeting consisting exclusively of Scripture elders, that is preachers, for the purpose of attending to those duties which Christ and his apostles enjoined upon them *alone*, viz., examination, licensure and ordination of candidates for the ministry. This meeting is called the ministerium or presbytery, by which in Scripture is meant ministers alone." (*Formula*, ch., xvii., sec. 1.) The other theory expresses itself in words like the following: "It is both the right and the duty of the whole Church, through her representatives, clerical and lay, to take an active part in the discussions and decisions of all questions affecting her welfare, and among others, especially also in the great question as to who shall constitute her ministry." (*Ev. Review*, vol. xii., p. 405.) And, for the practical adoption of this latter theory, whether wisely or not time will reveal, provision has been made by our General Synod in her revised Constitution for District Synods, where it is declared: "In all cases where District Synods *have not made provision for a Ministerium*, all the powers and duties prescribed in this Article (on *Ministerium*) shall devolve on the Synod." (Article viii., sec. 14.)

To this second theory there are, in my judgment, clear and weighty objections; and the first theory, therefore, which maintains that ordination is properly the act alone of the ordained, or that those only who are themselves rightly in the office can rightly induct others into it, is the theory which I believe accords best both with the intrinsic fitness of things or essential requirements of the case, and the indications or teachings upon the subject of the word of God. The advocates of the former of these two theories, namely that the laity should also have a voice in determining who shall constitute the ministry, do not, it should in justice to them be said, ask that the immediate act of ordination itself, the laying on of hands,



or the public ceremony by which the candidate is set apart to the work of the ministry, should be participated in by the laity. This they admit should be done by the ministry only. All that they demand is that the laity should sit with the clergy in the examination into the qualification or fitness for the office of the candidate, and should have a vote or voice in determining who shall be ordained. "I have not only," says one distinguished advocate of the supposed rights of the laity in the matter, "no objection to ministers ordaining ministers, but believe that it is very proper and becoming that they should do this." And another equally respected champion for lay rights, in determining who shall fill the ministerial office, uses this language: "Nor does this proposition contemplate any interference on the part of the laity with any of the prerogatives that can be clearly shown to belong to the ministry, as for instance, their right and duty to *ordain*, *i. e.*, solemnly set apart to their official work, by prayer and the imposition of hands, those whom God has called, through the Church, to that department of Christian activity. Ordination is evidently set forth in the Scriptures as a presbyterial, *i. e.*, ministerial act, and should therefore be performed by ministers alone. And all the opposition manifested to the proposed change, on the ground that the laity have no right to ordain, arose from an entire misapprehension of the question at issue. No claim of that kind is set up on behalf of the laity. We have no sympathy whatever with those who claim for the so-called *lay-elders* a right to participate in this solemnity." (*Evangelical Review*, Vol. XII., p. 403.) And a more recent defender of the laity over against the ministry, upon this question of ordination, narrows the point of dispute, if possible, still more. "The actual point of difference," he says, "is neither who shall examine candidates for licensure nor who shall ordain, that is, perform the ceremony of induction into the sacred office. About the superior competency and the propriety of the *ministry* to conduct the examination of candidates, or about the special fitness and more orderly mode of the ministry performing the act of ordination, there is no variance of opinion. It must be borne in mind distinctly that the present is not a case of either competency, fitness, or order, but a case of inherent authority or power. The real question, then, about which there can be any dispute among those who adhere to the Lutheran view of Church polity, is, to whom has been delegated primarily the authority to license and ordain." (*Quarterly Review*, Vol. VI., p. 250.)



The point at issue, then, in answer to the special question now before us, namely, "Through whom does the Church lawfully and properly perform the act of ordination or give the call to the ministerial office?" is, whether the laity are entitled to take any part whatever in determining to whom the call to the office of the ministry shall be given. Does the Church in giving the call express or decide such call alone through *the ministry*, as her representatives and acting in her stead, or does she do so through the joint action, as her representatives, both of the ministry *and* laity?

That the true call to the office of the ministry is given only and solely through the ministry, as the divinely appointed representatives of the Church, and that the laity are entitled to no participation whatever in determining to whom it shall be given, is evident to my mind, if not to that of others, for a number of reasons.

(1) One reason lies in the fact that the opposite view rests, in its very foundation, upon certain mere assumptions, or mere half-truths at best.

One of these mere assumptions or half-truths is the false or one-sided view of the Church as a Republic, an ecclesiastical Democracy, in which the popular will and popular suffrage are the source of authority and power. There is, of course, some truth in this view; but by no means the whole truth, nor the chief and essential truth. The Church of Christ, in its essential elements, is not a Republic, but a Kingdom. (Psalm ii. 6; Dan. vii. 14; Eph. i. 22-23). But if the Church is thus a *Kingdom*, then the source of power and authority is not in the ruled, but in the ruler; not in popular suffrage, but in the order of things as established in the very organization of the Church by the Divine King of this Kingdom; for in a Kingdom the authority does not flow from below upward, but from above downward. And this is precisely, as we think, where exists the source of authority with regard to the office and perpetuation of the ministry. If the Church is a pure Republic, a mere Democracy, then, without a single word of debate, we will freely admit that the laity shall share in giving the call to the ministry; and will also admit that they *alone* shall give it; for then, as a divine institution, there is no office of the ministry at all in the Church. But if, on the other hand, the Church is a Kingdom, and Christ is the Head and King, then is there also a government over the Church; and if there be a government, then also must there, by divine appointment, be offi-

cers to whom is intrusted the exercise of the authority and functions of that government. These officers, at first appointed or commissioned by the King himself, were the Apostles. Since the Apostles, and virtually as their successors, the officers in this Kingdom of Christ are the gospel ministry.\* For whilst in the gift of inspiration, and in the power of working miracles, and in the ability of discerning spirits, and in some other respects, the Apostles stand alone and have no successors, yet as the commissioned and authorized expounders of the King's message, as the administrators of his sacraments, and as the possessors of the right to exercise the power of the keys, they have successors, and those successors are not a line of popes or bishops as a superior and distinct order, but the Christian Ministry, filling an office whose chief work is the preaching of the divine word. But this office, in the very nature of the case, or in view of the very fact that the Church is not a Republic but a Kingdom, cannot be filled by the voice and suffrage of the people, but can only be filled, either immediately by the King himself, or mediately

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\*“Our Lord before His ascension instituted the office of the *Apostolate*, having within it all the powers of the future ministry. The Apostolate had *extraordinary* and incommunicable powers and functions. It had also *ordinary* and communicable powers and functions, which were to be transmitted and perpetuated in and through the ordinary ministry to the end of the world.” (Mark iii. 13, 14; Matt. x. 2; Luke vi. 13; Acts i. 2–25; Rom. i. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29; Eph. ii. 20; 2 Pet. iii. 2; Rev. xxi. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11; 2 Peter i. 1; 1 Tim. i. 18; 2 Tim. i. 13; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Matt. xxviii. 20; 2 Cor. v. 19.)

“In addition to their extraordinary or special powers and functions, the Apostles had the *ordinary* ones, common to the whole ministry, to wit: the preaching of the Gospel, conferring the sacraments, administering discipline, and ordaining others to the ministry. In each and all of these they were but fellow-presbyters, ministers, pastors and bishops with other ministers.” (Acts i. 20; v. 42; xx. 24; Rom. i. 15; Eph. iii. 8; vi. 19; 1 Cor. iv. 1; Matt. xxviii. 19; 1 Peter v. 1; 1 Cor. iii. 5; 2 Cor. xi. 23; Col. i. 7, 23–25; John xxi. 16.)

“In their extraordinary powers and functions, the Apostles had no *successors*. In their ordinary ones all true ministers of Christ are their successors. There is a ministerial succession unbroken in the Church; but there is no personal succession in a particular line of transmission. The ministry that is, ordains the ministry that comes. The ministry of successive generations has always been inducted into the office of the ministry preceding; but the so-called apostolical succession or canonical succession does not exist, would be incapable of demonstration if it did exist, and would be of no essential value even if it could be demonstrated.” (1 Tim. i. 18; iv. 14; v. 22; Acts xiv. 23; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Titus i. 5).—*Thetical Statement of the Doctrine concerning the Ministry of the Gospel*, by Dr. C. P. Krauth.

by those whom the King has authorized so to do in his stead. Those thus authorized are, we feel convinced, not the Church, as a mere popular assembly, but the ministry as part of the Church, acting in the name of Christ and with the authority of Christ, for the Church.

Another assumption or half-truth upon which the right is claimed for the laity to share in filling the ministerial office, is that which regards the universal priesthood of believers as the source of the ministerial office. We have already expressed ourselves freely upon this point. But this we wish yet here most emphatically to express, namely that the office of the ministry is purely and only an office of *divine* institution. Or, in the words of another: "The Christian Ministry is of direct divine appointment, and whilst the call may be mediated through the Church, it is no growth or development out of any universal priesthood. The doctrine of development or evolution, as applied to the ministry, has no more foundation in the word of God than it has in the world of nature. In both cases it tends to exclude a designing and governing Mind: in the one we must dispense with an all-wise Creator, in the other with him who is Head over all to his Church. In the Smalcald Articles we read, not that the office of the ministry springs out of the universal priesthood of believers, but:

"We are clearly taught that the office of the ministry originates from the common call of the Apostles."

Again:

"It must be confessed, that the Church is not built upon the power of any man, but it is built upon that office which bears the confession made by Peter, namely that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God (Matt. xvi. 16); for this reason Christ also speaks unto him as a minister of that office, in which this confession and doctrine should exist; and he says: Upon this rock, that is, upon this doctrine and ministerial office."

The German has, *diese Predigt und Predigamt*: the Latin, *hoc ministerium*. If the Church, according to this testimony of the Reformers, is built upon the ministry—of course Christ himself being the chief corner stone—how can the ministry be developed as an office out of the Church? Individual ministers may spring from the bosom of the Church, and may be recognized and authorized by the Church to exercise their office in the midst of the Church; but

the office itself is of divine appointment, and underlies the very existence of the Church." (*Quarterly Review* vol. vi., p. 409.)

Still another of these half-truths which becloud and mislead the minds of many, and which serve to produce the view that to the laity as well as to the ministry belongs the right to give the ministerial call, is the plausible sophism that the ministry is the servant of the Church, and that the Church, in the very nature of things, should be allowed the privilege of determining who shall be its servants in the ministry. To which we answer: The ministry is, in a certain sense, the servant of the Church. It is one of the ascended Saviour's gifts to the Church, for the edifying of the Church. "For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas." (1 Cor. iii. 22) But, in the highest and in the supreme sense, the minister of the Gospel is not the servant of the Church at all, but purely and only the servant of Christ. "We are ambassadors for *Christ*"—"Paul, a servant of *Jesus Christ*"—"If I yet please men I should not be the servant of *Christ*"—"The gospel which was preached of me, is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of *Jesus Christ*"—"Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which *the Holy Ghost* hath made you overseers;" texts which teach that the minister is not primarily the servant of the Church, but the servant of Christ. Besides, this sophism that the ministry are the servants of the *Church*, assumes that the laity alone constitute the Church; whereas the ministry and the laity together, as fellow believers in Christ, constitute it; and hence the action of the ministry, in filling the ministerial office, although not formally authorized by the laity to do so, is nevertheless the act of the Church, done not by the whole body but by part of it, namely by the ministry, whom Christ as Head of the Church has, as we believe, authorized to act in this respect for the whole Church, as her representative and proper organ of official conduct.

(2) But we derive a *second* argument against granting to the laity a voice in determining to whom the call to the ministry shall be given, *on the ground of their evident incapacity rightly to discriminate and judge concerning ministerial qualifications*. We are well aware that to assume such a position exposes one to popular censure, and even odium. But, whilst aware of all this, we still prefer to be honest and frank in the utterance of our opinion. For the piety and



exalted character of the laity of our Church and of all Protestant Churches, we have a most profound respect, and cherish for them as brethren in Christ a most fervent Christian affection. For the intelligence and sound practical sense and power of wise judgment which *many* of them, scattered here and there through our Churches, possess, we also cherish a very high opinion. But still, taking the laity of any Church as a body, accepting the average degree of intelligence and discrimination which they possess, we have no hesitation to declare that they are utterly incompetent rightly to judge and decide concerning the qualifications requisite on the part of a candidate for the ministerial office. Of course, this is a point which cannot be well determined by argument. But does it, we may ask, seem reasonable to expect that the lay element of our Churches would be competent judges in the case? Are not the qualifications required for admission into the ministerial office such as in the very order of things, or in the very nature of the case, would lie outside of the study and knowledge of almost every one except those who are themselves in the office of the ministry? What reason have we to expect that laymen as a body have the ability to sit as wise and discriminating judges of a candidate's knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, of the Evidences of Christianity, of Natural and Revealed Theology, of Church History, of Pastoral Theology, of the Rules of Sermonizing, and of Church Government? And even in regard to the simple and practical subject of the candidate's personal piety, or moral and spiritual fitness for the ministerial office, how many of our laymen, in the present day, are imbued with utterly unscriptural and erroneous conceptions of conversion and of the new life of Christ in the soul, unfitting them to judge correctly, even in this respect, of a man's fitness for the work. Why, in every other profession and department of trade or business, are those, and those only, who are themselves in the profession or trade or business, set to judge, and regarded as alone competent to judge, with regard to the fitness of those applying for admission, whilst for admission into this highest of all professions, requiring the most special qualifications, and involving the highest and most lasting responsibilities, the decision of the case is to be, in large part, submitted to those who are themselves outside of the profession, and who make no pretension to a knowledge of many or any of its requirements. Why should lawyers alone decide who shall be admitted to the prac-



tice of law, and physicians alone who shall enter the medical profession, and military men alone who shall be enrolled in the ranks of the military, and mechanics alone who shall be received into the different unions or orders of mechanics—those *in* each profession, and no others, weighing the qualifications and deciding as to the fitness of those who apply for admission—and yet the ministry be denied the right and privilege of determining who shall be admitted into the office of the ministry? Why should this be pressed as an exception? Why in this case, and in this case alone, should those not in the profession be made judges of men's fitness for the profession? The demand, upon the very face of it, bears the evidence of its own unreason and impropriety, and merits prompt and most emphatic refusal.

If the lay element sent up to our synodical assemblies by the churches were always the wisest and most discerning men in the churches, selected and sent because of their superior wisdom and power of discernment, our opposition, on this ground of incompetency, to allowing the laity a voice in determining to whom the ministerial call should be given, would, we admit, be largely modified; although even then, upon other grounds, we would still oppose it. But to those of us who know that the direct reverse is the case, that men are thus sent without any regard whatever to intelligence or ability for their mission, but often simply to please and humor them, or because they often are the only ones whom the pastor can secure to accompany him, and to those of us who have noted the appalling stupidity and mental vacancy of many of the laymen who make up our synodical roll, we feel that it would be a most fearful violation of everything sacred and right, degrading the ministerial office and imperiling the interests of the gospel and cause of Christ, to accord to any such element even the faintest voice in determining to whom shall be given the call to the high and holy office of the ministry. And hence, not by ministers *and* laymen, and not by *Synods*, composed of the latter as well as the former, but by ministers *only*, assembled purely as a Ministerium, should the Church give the call to the ministerial office!

(3) A *third* argument, however, against granting to the lay element of the Church any part whatever in determining to whom the ministerial call should be given, may be derived from the fact that this is the judgment and practice of the Protestant Church generally.

In itself this, of course, would not constitute a valid argument; for there is a possibility, although by no means a probability, that in this respect the general judgment and practice might be unscriptural and erroneous. But it still has some force as an argument, and helps to confirm what other arguments serve to establish. Instead, therefore, of abolishing the Ministerium, as the organ by which to examine and ordain men into the office of the ministry, and entrusting such examination and ordination to a Synod composed of laymen as well as of ministers, as has been claimed, on the ground that such a step would place us as a Church "in an attitude of desirable conformity to the faith and usages of our Protestant brethren," we find that by doing so we would really be sundering ourselves from them, and would be departing from the judgment and practice of the Church general in this respect. Neither in the Methodist Episcopal, in the Presbyterian, in the Congregational, nor in the Protestant Episcopal Church, do laymen, as laymen, have either voice or vote in determining who shall be admitted into the ministerial office. In all these large and intelligent denominations, the ministry alone rightly determine to whom the ministerial call shall be given. For, as Dr. Hodge correctly says, "It is a principle which is universally admitted by all denominations of Christians, except the Independents, that the right to ordain to any office in the Church belongs to those who hold that office, or one superior to it, and which includes it." And again: "If then it is admitted that ministers and ruling elders hold different offices, and if, as has been clearly shown from the constitution, ordination confers office, the inference seems unavoidable that those only who hold the office of a minister of the Gospel can confer that office upon others. Presbyterians deny the right of ordination to the civil magistrate; they deny it, under ordinary circumstances, to the people; they deny it to any who have not themselves been invested with the office conferred." Again: "Presbyterial ordination is ordination by a presbyter or presbyters, and not by a presbytery, in our technical sense of the term. This is surely the doctrine of the Scriptures, and the only doctrine on which we can hold up our heads in the presence of prelacy," (*Church Polity*, pp. 273, 275, 293).

The position, then, which we take, in thus excluding the laity from any direct part in the admission of men into the office of the ministry, is not a singular one, but is the position which, for good

reasons, has been adopted by a number of the largest and most intelligent denominations which to-day compose Protestant Christendom. The judgment of them all is that it is both right in principle and expedient in practice that those only who are themselves in the ministry should exercise the right of calling others into the ministry.

(4) A *fourth* argument, however, in favor of our position, that ministers only should give the call to the ministerial office, we derive from the fact that this, we believe, notwithstanding all that has been cited and written to the contrary, is the position which our Lutheran Confessions and the writings of our greatest Lutheran dogmaticians, honestly and impartially interpreted, really maintain.

As is well known, there are, according to our leading Lutheran writers, in the Church three estates or orders, namely, the ecclesiastical, the political, and the domestic, or the Presbytery, the Magistracy, and the Laity, to each of which three estates or orders, as part of the Church, belongs some share in the provision and settlement of pastors.

Without entering into any discussion of the correctness of this division of the Church into these three estates, and of this conclusion that to each thus belongs the right to share in providing the Church with a ministry, yet one thing is manifest, namely, that our Lutheran confessors and dogmaticians had clear conceptions of what was, in the calling of men into the ministry, the proper and special part, according to their judgment, of each of these three estates; and that, according to their judgment, the duty of examining candidates for the ministry, deciding upon their qualifications, and then by ordination inducting them into the sacred office, was purely and only the work of the first of these three estates (*Status Ecclesiasticus*), or the ministry.

This Article (XIV.) of the Augsburg Confession, whilst very strongly declaring that no one shall perform the duties of the ministerial office without a right call to the office, does not, it is true, declare *by whom this call shall be given*. The *vocatio*, it declares, is necessary. No one can make himself a member of the estate or ministerial order. It must be done, in the name of the Church, by others. But it does not definitely state by whom. And yet Melancthon, in his explanation afterward of the Article in the *Apology*, indicates, we think, clearly by whom, in his judgment, this call to the ministry by ordination should be given, and by

whom only it should be given. According to that explanation he was willing, if only it was recognized as merely *auctoritate humana*, to abide by the order then prevailing, *i. e.* to accord to the Romish bishops exclusively the right of ordaining to the ministry, thus even depriving the ministry, as a class, of the right, and much more, of course, depriving the laity of the right. The addition, also, which he afterward makes in the *Variata*, in the words “sicut et Paulus præcipit Tito, ut in civitatibus Presbyteros constituat,” confirms the view that the “*rite vocatus*” demanded by the Fourteenth Article of the Confession, could, according to Melancthon’s opinion, be given only by the ministry or by those themselves in the order, as was Titus to whom Paul thus gave command to ordain others into it. It should, also, as Bilmar (*Die Augsburgische Confession erklärt von A. F. C. Bilmar*, p. 131) well says, “be noted that the Confession, in harmony with the passage from the preface relating thereto, assumes the words ‘*Kirchen-regiment*,’ or ‘*Church Government*,’ and ‘*Ordo*’ to be synonymous, thereby unequivocally excluding from church government him who has not the ‘*Ordo*,’ *i. e.* laymen. Spiritual things, such as the preaching of the word, the administration of the sacraments, and the power of the keys, appertain to the *Ordo* only, and to no one else, no one except the *Ordo* having anything to say in regard to them.”

Article XXVIII. of the Confession will help us to determine what were Melancthon’s precise views upon the point now under consideration. He there expresses himself distinctly. “The bishop’s (*i. e.* minister’s) office, according to divine right, is therefore to preach the Gospel, to remit sins, to judge of doctrine, etc.” But, if it is thus in general the especial duty of the ministry “to judge of doctrine,” it surely also is “to judge of the doctrine” as held by those seeking a call from the Church to preach.

As far, therefore, as we can gather from the Confession itself, or from the Apology, the confessors designed by the Fourteenth Article of the Augustana to teach that the call to the office of the ministry should only be given by the ministry. And if the question be asked, Why did they not clearly state that this was their sense of it? we reply: There was no *necessity* to do so. “This particular point was not in dispute. At that time no one questioned the right and propriety of candidates for the ministry being examined by those already in the holy office.” (*Quarterly Review*, vol. vi., p. 85).



Upon this subject of the call to the ministry Luther has written much, and not always, we are compelled to add, with as much clearness and self-consistency as could be desired. As may be seen in quotations from his writings, presented in preceding parts of our lecture, and in many others which might be given, especially the well-known language of the Smalcald Articles bearing upon this point, he has clearly expressed the opinion that "*churches, i. e. local congregations, possess the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers*"—that "wherever there is a true *church*, there is also the power to elect and ordain ministers"—that "the true church, because it alone possesses a priesthood, must also have power to choose and ordain ministers." And yet in the interpretation of this language of Luther, in order to ascertain precisely what his views were, we must do two things. We must, first, grasp clearly the point under dispute in connection with which he uses such language. We must ask: What is the scope or aim of it? To any one who will do this it will become manifest that Luther, in the use of such language, always employs it, not to assert that the *people* and *not* the ordained ministry, or that the people together *with* the ordained ministry, should examine, vote upon, and ordain men into the office of the ministry, for that is never the point disputed, but to assert, over against the hierarchical claims of Rome, that the people and not the bishops shall have the right to determine who shall be their ministers or pastors. "The Reformers were protesting against the right of the popes and bishops to deprive the churches of proper teachers or ministers, and arrogate to themselves the exclusive authority to make and appoint priests at their pleasure, without the consent of churches and regardless of their welfare." And then we must, secondly, remember that when Luther thus asserts the right of churches to give the call to the office of the ministry, he guards or cautions carefully against the *exercise* of this inherent right except *in case of necessity*; and he "reminds those who would pervert his teachings that he has said such things only *of extreme necessity*." Bearing these two things steadily in mind, even Luther's strong assertions, seemingly favoring the opposite view, can all, we believe, be harmonized with the position that the ordained ministry alone should admit men into the ministry.

What the testimony of the leading dogmaticians of our Church is upon this point is familiar to us all. Availing myself of the labors



of others, I cite the following extracts in proof of the position for which I am contending:

Chemnitz, L. T. (*De Ecclesia*, iii., p. 123): "It is certainly and clearly evident both from the commands and examples of Scripture (Tit. i. 5; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Acts xiv. 23) that *those who are already in the ministry, and profess the sacred doctrine, should be employed whenever through a mediate call the ministry is entrusted to any one.* \* \* Therefore the election and call of ministers of the Church should not be submitted either to the ministers alone, or to the magistrates alone, or to the ignorance and inconsiderateness of the promiscuous multitude alone."

Gerhard, L. T. (*De Min. Eccl.*, § 85): "That bishops and presbyters are to be employed when the ministry is to be entrusted to any one, is evident from the apostolic command and approved examples of scripture. The same is confirmed by clear reason. For those who have been previously engaged in the ministry, and who profess the sound doctrine, can judge most correctly concerning the qualifications of those who are to be called to the office of teaching."

Ib. (86): "Speaking generally, and to give an example, we may say that the examination, ordination, and inauguration belong to the *Presbytery*; the nomination, presentation and confirmation to the *Christian Magistrate*; and the consent, vote and approval, or, according to circumstances, the demand, to *the People*. Therefore the general principle that pastors should be called with the consent of the church, or that no one should be obtruded upon the church when it is unwilling, has express testimonies in scripture, and was approved by the constant practice of the primitive church; but the form of the election *in specie* varies, for sometimes the vote of the people was necessary in nominating persons, and sometimes their approval was required for those before nominated." (Acts i. 15, 23, 26; vi. 3; xiv. 23; 1 Cor. xvi. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 19; 1 Tim. iii. 7; v. 22; iv. 14.)

Quenstedt, T. D. P. (*De Min. Eccl.*, iii., 402): "Each part of the church has its own functions in the calling of ministers. It is the office of the clergy to examine the candidates for the ministry, to inquire into their learning and life, to consider and judge concerning the gifts necessary for the ministry of the church, and to inaugurate them by the laying on of hands. It belongs to the Christian magistrate to nominate them, to present them when called, and to ratify

their examination. The duty of the people is to give the call, to approve by their vote and testimony, and to elect."

Hollazius (*Examen De Min. Ecc.*, q. vii., Prob. b.): "The call of ministers, generally and comprehensively considered (as embracing election, ordination and the call especially so called), would be so attended to by the whole Church, and all its three orders, that due order be preserved and confusion be avoided. Therefore the examination, ordination and inauguration belong to the *presbytery*, the nomination, presentation and confirmation to the Christian magistrate, and the consent, vote and approval to the people."

Hunnius (782): "To ministers belongs the right of ordaining ministers."

Now, we have made these quotations from the writings of our leading dogmaticians for a single purpose, viz, to show that whatever part, in the giving of the ministerial call, they may assign to the magistracy or to the people, the part of examining, ordaining and inducting into the office they unanimously accord alone to the ministry. If necessary many other extracts might be added to these which we have thus given, making this point clear beyond all possibility of denial. The existence, therefore, of a *Ministerium*, by whom alone the induction of men into the ministerial office shall be performed, is, we believe, thoroughly Lutheran, or in entire harmony with the views of the leading Lutheran, dogmatic writers. And with such an arrangement, even under our own American republican form of government, each of the three estates or orders, according to these old dogmaticians, literally exercises its proper right or part in the giving of the call. The magistracy, instead of directly exercising its right, delegates the exercise of it to the other two estates or orders. The ministry examine and ordain or call into the office; and the people elect or choose their own pastors, thus confirming the judgment and act of the ministry. And thus, in this related and joint act of the state, the ministry and the people, the Church, which embraces them all, gives the ministerial call.

(5) A final argument, however, and the most weighty of all, in favor of our position that to the ministry alone belongs the right to give the call to the ministry, we base upon the fact that this, we believe, is *the position, or teaching, of the word of God*.

Of course, the very question in dispute is: What does the word of God teach concerning the matter? What is, according to the

Scriptures, the right method of perpetuating the ministry? What was the precise order of procedure in the induction of men into the ministerial office employed by the apostles and the primitive Church? According to the principles and practices found in the Bible, is the investment of men with ministerial authority the act properly alone of the ministry, or is it the joint act both of the people and ministry? Or, drawing the lines still closer, even where it is evident that the act of inducting into the sacred office was performed by the ministry alone, was it thus performed by power and authority vested in them, as the incumbents of the office, by Christ the Head of the Church, or was it performed by power and authority delegated to them by the church, as the act of the church whose official representatives they, for the time being, were?

To these questions, by men equally eminent for ability and piety, directly opposite conclusions have been reached and opposite answers have been given. To some, viewing the question in the light of God's word, it is clear that *the ministry alone*, by divine authority, and to the entire exclusion of the laity, possess the authority to make ministers or to give the call to the ministerial office; and to others, viewing the subject in the same light, it is equally clear that the true call to the ministry is the act of the Church, *embracing both the ministry and the laity*, and hence that even when the act is wholly performed by the ministry, it is yet thus performed, not as the separate and independent act of the ministry, as having in itself by divine authority so to do, but as the act of the Church, having in itself divine bestowal the authority to call, but delegating to the ministry, because of its greater competency, the exercise of this authority.

The Scriptures therefore do not, we may assume, with entire clearness, and beyond room for controversy, determine by whom precisely this call to the ministry is to be given.

Our judgment, however, is that the weight of Bible testimony is very decidedly in favor of the position that the ministry is a purely self-perpetuating institution in the Church; being itself part of the Church and officially representing the Church, and yet deriving its authority not from the Church, but from Christ the divine Head of the Church. The right, therefore, to give the call to the ministry is one which, we believe, belongs wholly and only to the ministry, and this not as a delegated right from the Church, but as a divinely conferred right from Christ. We are willing to adopt as our own the

views expressed by Lœhe (*Aphorismen über die Neu-testamentlichen Aempter*, p. 71): "The office stands in the midst of the Church like a fruitful tree that has its seed in itself. As long as the examination and ordination remain in the hands of the presbyterium or pastors it is right, and can be maintained that it completes itself, and propagates itself from person to person and from generation to generation. Those who hold it pass it along, and he to whom its incumbents transfer it, holds it as from God. The office is a stream of blessing that pours itself from the Apostles upon their disciples, and from these onward into future times." Or we accept the declaration of Grabau (*Der Missouriische u. Iowanische Geist und die Lehre der Lutherischen Kirche*, p. 20): "As Christ is the only Lord and ruler of his Church, and as such has given the holy ministry, the gospel and the sacraments, and has thereby established for himself an office of the ministry, so church government (kirchen-regiment) does not rest upon the relinquishment of rights or upon regulations made by the multitude, but primarily upon the faithful service of the pastors and the ministers of God's word, from which goes forth the faith and the life of the congregation."

This position that the ministry is thus a self-perpetuating office, and is such by divine appointment and arrangement, and not by any delegated authority from the Church to the ministry to act in its name and as its organ, is, we believe, thoroughly in accord with the teachings of the word of God.

Our blessed Saviour, shortly before his ascension into heaven, instituted, in a formal and authoritative manner, the apostolic office. In the commission which he then gave the eleven, he said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," or end of the "age," *i. e.*, of this present dispensation or Christian age: *ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος*. Looking at this commission we find that its duties consisted of the following three particulars: *μαθητεῖν*, *βαπτίζειν*, and *διδάσκειν*, *i. e.* 1. To disciple all nations, or convert them to the faith; 2. To initiate them into the Church by baptism; and 3. To instruct them, when baptized, in the doctrines and duties of a Christian life. (*Bloomfield, in loc.*)



But this, as we all know, is substantially the work also of the ministry. Essentially, therefore, the apostolic office and the ministerial office are the same office. The apostles, in certain well defined gifts and duties, necessary and devolving upon them in their especial work of founding or planting the Church, of course stand alone and have, as we have already said, no successors. But in so far as the special duties are concerned which their commission, which was their call to the office, details, and which the Saviour laid upon them as their official life-work, they have legitimate and true successors in the gospel ministry. The functions to be performed both by the apostles and by the ministry are in substance, or in their essential character, the same, and hence the office in both is essentially also the same. (*Ev. Rev.*, vol. xi., p. 320).

A further examination, however, of this apostolic commission, reveals the additional fact that it was not addressed by the Saviour to the apostles simply as individuals, to be limited to them, and to terminate with them, but it was addressed to them, *as the incumbents of an office*, which was to continue after them, and which was to take up and carry on the work which they thus, under the Saviour's command and direction, began. The very terms of the commission disclose that this is its character. "He commands, in the first place, to go into all the world; for the purpose, in the second place, of preaching the Gospel to every creature; assured, in the third place, that he is with them always, and even unto the end of the world. Either of these propositions, or all of them together, most positively precludes the idea that this language of the Saviour was addressed to the Apostles in their merely *individual* capacity; for neither did they, nor could they themselves go into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature, and unto *the end of the world* be assured that Christ was with them in authority and power." (*Ev. Review*, vol. xi., p. 327.)

And yet this commission thus to disciple all nations by baptizing and by teaching, or by the performance of ministerial functions, is specifically addressed by the Saviour to *them*, the Eleven, and not to the general body of believers, or to the people with them as constituting together the Church.

The conclusion, therefore, it appears to us, is inevitable that the words of the commission were not only an investiture of the apostles with divine authority themselves to enter the ministerial office,



but also to call others into it; *i. e.* to perpetuate the office, so that after them those whom they had chosen and ordained as their successors might carry on the work which they had thus begun. They themselves, by the very terms of the commission, were, without the co-operation of the general body of believers, authorized by the Saviour both to be ministers and to call or make ministers. As Prof. Worley expresses it; "The only logical deduction that can be made from the passage (Matt. xxviii. 16-20) is that it was addressed to the Eleven as those from whom, until the end of time, yet under Christ, in themselves and in those to whom they committed the authority by the will of Christ, the office of preaching should go forth, bearing in its hands the gracious blessing of salvation to the whole perishing world, and until the Church militant is completely taken up into the Church triumphant." *Ev. Review*, vol. xi., p. 328.)

And this deduction, as the same writer further shows, is confirmed by the entire subsequent practice or acts of the Apostles. Instead of referring the appointment of ministers, either wholly or in part, to the people, or to the whole congregation of believers, they, there is clear proof, at least in many, if not in all instances, assumed the authority thus to appoint all to themselves, thus showing that they had in their commission been invested by the Saviour with such authority, "that Christ *intended* it so to be, viz.: that the authorization of public teachers in the Church should proceed from those whom he had appointed already to the office."

In evidence of this let us examine some of the passages bearing upon the subject.

Take first the passage found in Acts xiv. 23, referring to the ordination of elders by Paul and Barnabas in the churches which they had founded and were then revisiting and confirming in the faith. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed." *Χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, ἰ. e.* they appointed or placed over these churches elders or pastors who might lead and direct them—not *one* elder in each church, but *several* elders in each: *πρεσβυτερον.* *Χειροτονεῖν* signifies: *to raise the hands; to vote, elect, by stretching out the hands.* The expression has by some therefore been taken to mean that these elders were elected or chosen first by the vote of the people, expressed by the uplifting of

the hand, and that this election thus expressed was then afterward ratified by the apostles by the laying on of hands or ordination. This is the view of the passage taken by Chemnitz: "Paul and Barnabas," he says, "ordained elders in every church established by them. But they did not assume the right and authority exclusively of electing and installing pastors; but Luke uses the word χειροτονήσαντες, which (2 Cor. viii. 19) is used concerning the election which took place by the vote of the congregation; the same being taken from a Greek usage, giving their votes by stretching forth the hand, and signifies the investing of some one with the office by votes, to designate him or give their consent." But, as *Bloomfield* (in loco) has said, this sense of the passage "requires a very strained interpretation to be put on χειροτονήσαντες, and one moreover which is forbidden by the αὐτοὺς following." And he adds: "There is, indeed, no point on which the most learned have been so much agreed as this, that χειροτονήσας here simply denotes "having *selected, constituted, appointed*. See Hammon, Whitby, Wolf, and especially Kuinoel." And Olshausen says: "The expression in verse 23 is a peculiar one, χειροτονήσαντες αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους, *electing for them elders*." "It does not," he adds, "permit us to suppose there was a free choice on the part of the church, but intimates that the Apostles *themselves* sought out the parties qualified for office." This ordaining of elders or pastors by Paul and Barnabas was then, we hold, according to the natural and grammatical sense of the text, the act of the Apostles themselves, and does not include in any way the active participation of the congregation. We may suppose, of course, that the congregation fully acquiesced in the choice and ordination which the apostles thus made, and heartily and gladly accepted those thus ordained as their pastors; but there is, we maintain, no basis whatever in the text for the inference that the congregation first chose them as pastors, or by election gave them the ministerial call, and that the apostles then afterward simply by ordination confirmed or ratified that call.

But, take next the passages (2 Tim. i. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 14) which refer to the ordination or induction into the ministerial office of Timothy, and it already appears that not the people, but the ministry performed the act. In Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy (i. 6), he puts him in remembrance to "stir up the gift of God which is in him by the putting on of Paul's hands," and therefore also commands him to "hold fast the form of sound words" which he had

heard of Paul, thus showing that Paul, by virtue of the grace given him of the Lord Jesus in bestowing upon him the office of an apostle, had also instructed Timothy and had appointed him to the holy office. And that Paul, in thus ordaining Timothy to the ministerial office, had not acted alone, nor with the consent or suffrage or co-operation of any congregation, but in ministerium, or along with other teachers and pastors or fellow presbyters, is evident from the language (1 Tim. iv. 14), where he writes: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery*." Τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου: "the eldership of that district to which Timothy belonged laid hands on him," says Wiesinger. "Confraternity of Presbyters, at the place where Timothy was ordained (perhaps Lystra) who, conjointly with the apostle, laid their hands on him," says Ellicott *in loc.* Wholly and only by the ministry, then, was Timothy examined, chosen, ordained, or inducted into the ministry.

Look now, in the next place, at the directions which Paul gives both to Timothy and to Titus with regard to the ordination of men to the ministry, and the position for which we are contending becomes yet more manifest. From the directions thus given, two things are evident, viz.: first that the apostles authorized those whom they ordained to ordain others, and thus perpetuate the ministerial office, and secondly, that they *alone* were thus authorized to ordain. Paul writes to Titus: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city ('one in one city, many in many'—Bp. Taylor—quoted by Ellicott *in loc.*) as I had appointed thee." How absolutely *individual* is not here the apostolic direction and authorization! How free from even the faintest intimation of such a thing as "the voice of the congregation," or "ordaining by the consent or order or authority of the congregation!" To Titus personally was the apostolic authority accorded, and by him personally, governed by his own judgment in each case, was that apostolic authority also to be exercised. To Timothy the Apostle gives in substance the same directions: "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. ii. 1-2.) And again (1 Tim. v. 22) he solemnly charges him: "Lay hands suddenly on no man,"

*i. e.*, that he should not ordain any man to the ministerial office with undue haste, or without first becoming thoroughly acquainted with him, and well assured of his entire fitness for it. And here again the authority to admit to the ministerial office, as in the directions to Titus, is entirely personal. Timothy, as an ordained minister, has full authority given him to ordain others; and there is again not the slightest intimation that this authority is to be exercised only in connection with or at the request of some congregation! And "when to all this we add the fact that, in connection with these directions 'thus to set apart teachers, as he himself had set them apart, Paul gives both to Timothy and Titus the particular qualifications which they are to look for in proper candidates for the holy office, and commands them to use great circumspection in the exercise of this right, we have the strongest scriptural assurance as to what construction the Apostles placed upon the authority with which Christ invested them and the course which they took in its exercise.'" (*Ev. Review*, vol. xi., p. 329.)

But there are other passages which are often cited, and which, we are told, clearly prove that ordination or the call to the ministry was *not* thus the independent and exclusive act alone of the ministry, but was the joint act of the ministry and the laity, or the act of the whole Church. The people, we are told, gave the call by electing whom they would as their pastors, and this congregational choice was then subsequently confirmed in the ordination by the ministry of those whom the people or congregation had thus called: *i. e.* that the people had a voice or vote, and indeed a very controlling one, in determining who should be admitted to the ministerial office, or to whom the ministerial call should be given.

The passage, *e. g.*, in Acts vi: 2-3, is often thus cited. We confess, however, with all possible respect for the judgment of those who thus cite it, that we are unable to discover the least pertinency or relevancy in it to the question at issue. The election of those seven men to serve as officers in the church at Jerusalem was a purely congregational matter, and, of course, the members of the congregation were entitled to a voice in its determination. They were laymen *before* they were thus chosen and set apart as deacons, and they were, so far as that affected them, equally laymen *afterwards*. Several of them, it is true, did subsequently become preachers of the Gospel, or incumbents of the ministerial office, but they did not



become such by this election and ordination. In this transaction, in which, it is freely admitted, the people elected and the apostles then appointed or set apart by the laying on of hands, they were merely elected and set apart to attend to a certain expressed and well defined congregational or local work, viz. to administer rightly what is called "*the daily ministration*," to "*serve tables*," to take charge, as we read, of "*this business*." The passage therefore, we hold, is utterly irrelevant to the point at issue, and hence proves really nothing either way with regard to the question whether the people, in apostolic days, had a voice in determining to whom the ministerial call should be given.

Another of the passages constantly cited by the advocates of the right of the laity to take part in the bestowal of the ministerial call in favor of their position, is the passage Acts xv., containing the record of the Council or Synod which was held at Jerusalem to adjust or determine the question whether circumcision, under the Christian dispensation, was a condition of salvation, which had been referred to it by the church at Antioch. Laymen, we are confidently told, "were present at this first ecclesiastical council, and took an active part in all its proceedings;" and, on the assumption that all this was, beyond a doubt, really so, we are further and frequently told that thus also should it now and always, in all ecclesiastical conventions, be, and especially in all those in which the Church determines so important a matter as the matter to whom the call to the office of the ministry should be given. But here again, as in the preceding citation, there are a number of things unproved and merely assumed, upon which however the entire argument is founded, and in consequence of which the whole conclusion is therefore invalidated. What real proof, *e. g.*, is there that "*the certain other of them*" who are mentioned as coming up with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, were lay delegates from the church at Antioch? What real proof is there that a single layman uttered a word or cast a ballot in the council or synod? What real proof indeed is there even of the presence of a layman in the council or synod, in an official capacity, or as constituting an official and authoritative part of the council or synod? We are bold to say that not one of these things can, from the passage, be clearly and satisfactorily *proven*. To us it is evident that the only parties actively participating were the commissioners Paul and Barnabas and the "certain other of them," most probably elders or



ministers from Antioch, and the elders and apostles at Jerusalem. These, we believe, were the only active participants in the proceedings. Paul and Barnabas were sent, not to confer with the multitude, but to confer with "*the apostles and elders* about this question;" and we read (v. 6) "and *the apostles and elders* came together for to consider of this matter." And whilst the sessions were evidently open to the congregation, and large numbers of the people were present (v. 12), and whilst after the deliberations and decisions it is said, "then pleased it the apostles and elders, *with the whole church*, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas," and whilst we also read: "the apostles and elders and *brethren* send greeting unto the brethren," still there is no proof that others than apostles and elders actually participated, and what is spoken of as thus having been the pleasure and message of "the whole church" and of "the brethren," may all be harmonized with what precedes upon the assumption that the apostles and elders acted in the case, so far as the church was concerned, *representatively*, *i. e.* in the name of the church. "The whole plea," writes another, "of the lay participation turns on the terms "*the whole church*," and "*brethren*." In regard to the first of these terms it occurs in connection with their resolving to send chosen men to accompany Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, and the other is rendered doubtful by the reading of the best manuscripts. The famous Codex Sinaiticus is against the term "*brethren*" as referring to persons separate from the apostles and elders. In this view Alford concurs. We have, then, little more than the shadow of a shadow of any active participation of the laity in this so-called synod, and, if they did have any participation, it still has no bearing on the question at issue. For it was a question, not of the ministry, but one affecting every member of the Church, and in which every lay member had direct and personal interest." (*Quarterly Review*, vol. iii., p. 102.)

But the *locus classicus* with those who regard the laity as entitled to participation in the admission of men to the office of the ministry, is the record (Acts i. 15-26) of the election and ordination of an apostle to take the place of Judas who, "by transgression, fell, that he might go to his own place." "Here," we are told with an air of triumph, "we have even the choice of an apostle by the multitude of the disciples, the whole church participating; and *a fortiori*, if the laity thus had part in the election or choice of an apostle, should they not now have the same in the call to the office of the ministry?"

This choice of a successor to Judas, upon which they lean so heavily for support of their position, will not, we are satisfied, if it is carefully and impartially considered, furnish them even the least reliable and satisfactory support. In the first place, the validity of the whole proceeding may very properly be questioned. The fact that of Matthias, thus elected to the apostleship, no further record whatever exists in scripture; the fact that this election took place before the special outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, for which the apostles had been commanded by Christ to wait, thus making this a hasty act, performed, if not against the command of Christ, yet at least without it; the fact that Christ himself afterward chose Paul as one of his inspired apostles; and the fact that in the Apocalypse (xxi. 14.) only *twelve* apostles are spoken of, in harmony with the original number constituting the apostolic college; all these facts make it more than probable that this entire transaction was unauthorized, unapproved, and invalid. But admitting for the sake of argument its validity, we deny, in the second place, that there is proof in the record that there really was, in the strict sense of the word, any such thing as an election by the suffrage of the assembled multitude. For possibly, as Dr. J. Addison Alexander suggests, the persons thus assembled did not vote at all; and, if there really was voting, there is nothing in the record to indicate certainly by whom it was done. Peter, it should be noted, in his address (*Worley*) upon the occasion, does not call upon the whole company to take part in the choice, but merely announces to them the necessity, in accordance with prophecy, that such choice be made; and the language in the latter part of the narrative is such that it cannot be said beyond question to include all present in the vote or lot which was cast. "It has been disputed," says Alexander, "whether it was only the Eleven or the whole assembly that *gave forth their lots*. The very question assumes, either that this was an election, in the ordinary sense of the expression, or that *lots* means *votes* or *ballots*, which is entirely at variance with the usage of the word, and with the circumstances of this case. This makes it wholly unimportant who performed the mere external act of drawing, shaking, or the like." (*Commentary on Acts in loco*.)

Our judgment of the transaction is that it took place in the *presence* of the congregation or disciples, but was not in any way per-

formed *by* them; that the apostle addressed them as he did, not to invite and prepare them to take part in it, but to explain to them and prepare them to witness what the apostles were then and there about to do; that the apostles themselves, in the nature of the case, could alone know who "had companied with them all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, beginning with the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from them," and that the apostles themselves, therefore, and not the multitude, appointed or selected two, meeting these conditions, and that *they* after prayer, gave forth or cast lots, thus leaving it to the Lord to show "whether of these two he had chosen to be a witness with them of his resurrection." We incline, indeed, to the opinion that the "*hundred and twenty*," or those designated by the general terms "*disciples*," in whose presence this choice of an apostle thus took place, were not the members of the church at Jerusalem at all, but were the seventy evangelists, and others representing the disciples or Church of Christ from all parts of the land, who were then, during the season of Pentecost, present in Jerusalem, and could easily thus be assembled together; so that, whilst there were yet no organized churches which they represented, or of which they were pastors, they still, in fact, were the representatives or pastors of the unorganized body of believers in various places. But, whether this be so or not, of this we feel certain, that there is no evidence in the record to justify the opinion that the multitude present, whoever they may have been, took any direct part in the transaction whatever, much less that they actively participated, and by their ballots or votes decided that Matthias, and not Joseph called Barsabas, should be the successor of Judas. And hence we are also clear that no argument can justly be drawn from this transaction of thus electing an apostle to take the place of the traitor Judas, in favor of now allowing those not themselves in the office of the gospel ministry to assist in deciding who shall be admitted into it.

Reviewing, then, all that we have now said, under this examination of the various scripture texts bearing upon the subject, the argument appears to us conclusive, beyond room for doubt, that the word of God clearly teaches that ministers, and ministers only, should decide who shall be ministers; or, in other words, that to the ministry only is granted the divine authority and right to give, in the name of the Church, the call to the ministerial office.

But, we proceed now to ask and answer our third and last question, viz.:

*What is the precise import or character of the act of ordination by which men are thus inducted into the ministerial office?*

There are *three* aspects in which ordination may be considered, namely: what it is in itself, what it is as the act of the Church, and what it is as the act of the applicant or person receiving ordination. Let us look at it briefly in each of these aspects.

Ordination, considered merely as a visible or external rite, consists in the laying on of the hands of the ministry, accompanied with prayer, by which imposition of hands and prayer the recipient is placed in the ministerial office and is clothed by the Church with authority to perform in her midst ministerial functions.

The ceremony of the laying on of hands, always employed by the Church in the ordination of men to the ministerial office, dates back as a ritual of induction into sacred positions and offices, even to the earliest ecclesiastical ages. Joshua, *e. g.*, was thus inducted, by special divine command, into the office to which he was called. (Numb. xxvii. 18.) Thus also were the seven deacons set apart to their offices. (Acts vi: 6.) Thus also were Paul and Barnabas set apart to their special missionary labors among the Gentiles. (Acts xiii. 3.) So also in the ordination of Timothy. (1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6.) The Apostle Paul also bids Timothy "lay hands suddenly on no man" (1 Tim. v: 22), showing that "when he wrote these words they had become a well known expression for ordaining to a sacred office. And this mode continued to be used in the Post-Apostolic Church, as is evidenced by the directions and forms of prayer for ordinations in what are called the apostolic constitutions." (*Jacob's Eccles. Polity of the New Testament*, p. 110.)

Whatever, then, we may regard the real import or content of ordination to be, this, at least, is clear, namely that, as a ceremony, consisting of prayer and the laying on of hands, it possesses divine approbation if not positive divine institution, and it comes down to us clothed with the authority and endowment not only of apostolic practice, but also of the continuous and unbroken practice of the Church during all the successive centuries since.

But what, let us now ask, is the import or the content of ordination, as a rite of induction into the ministerial office? What is it, not as a mere external ceremony, but in its spiritual or supernatural



and divine elements? What character precisely does it possess? Is it only a ceremony, or is it a ceremony in connection with which there are imparted spiritual gifts and graces? In a word, does ordination secure or give anything in the way of endowment or qualification for the office of the ministry from the Holy Ghost?

What the Romish theory concerning the essential character of ordination is, we have already seen. She esteems it as the highest and greatest of the sacraments, "sacramentum ordinis;" that sacrament by which men are fitted and endowed with power by the Holy Ghost to administer rightly all the other sacraments. "Propter ordinem," says Thomas Aquinas, "fit homo dispensator aliorum sacramentorum, ergo ordo habet magis rationem, quod sit sacramentum, quam alia."

The Greek Church takes the same view as does the Romish concerning it, declaring that "Orders are a sacrament, in which the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of the bishop's hands, ordains them that be rightly chosen to minister sacraments, and to feed the flock of Christ." (*Creeds of Christendom*, vol. ii., p. 501.)

That ordination is thus a sacrament, in the strict and correct sense of the word, or in the same sense in which Baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacraments, all Protestants heartily deny; although, in a certain wide and untechnical sense, our Lutheran confessors and dogmaticians were willing that it should be so called or designated. (Vide *Apology*, vii., 11. *Gerhard*, xii., b. 147).

But, whilst this Romish conception of ordination, as truly a sacrament, is undoubtedly an entirely extreme one, and involves a gross misapprehension of the ministerial office, and is therefore very properly rejected by all Protestant Churches and creeds, the question may still be asked whether many Protestants themselves, in their intense opposition to everything that partakes of a hierarchical principle, have not swung off into an opposite extreme, and, by making little or nothing of ordination, have also, perhaps, like the Romanists, missed the exact truth.

The views, *c. g.*, of Luther and of our earlier Lutheran dogmaticians, which assign to election by the congregation the call to the ministry, and which logically therefore regard ordination as not really necessary, and as being merely a solemn and impressive way of recognizing or publicly declaring that the person ordained has been called, and is by the call which he has already received already



also in the ministerial office, are certainly, in our judgment, thus extreme and utterly untenable when dispassionately considered in the light of God's word. We may not perhaps be able to determine and express what precisely is conferred in this ordination service by which men are inducted into the ministry, but this much to our mind is clear, that the Holy Spirit does confer spiritual gifts and graces of some kind and some degree; in other words, that whilst not in the Romish sense a sacrament, lifting the recipient up into an hierarchical order, and divinely imparting to him priestly and miraculous power or supernatural endowments which he did not before possess, and which are indelible and can never be lost, yet also is it not in the extreme Protestant sense a mere ceremony, imparting as the gift of the Holy Ghost no benediction, and leaving the spiritual character and qualifications of the person ordained the same in all respects as though he had not been ordained. This latter view is also, we are satisfied, equally with the former, an unscriptural extreme. In proof that ordination by the laying on of hands and prayer is more than only an empty rite, and that the Holy Ghost does in connection with it impart spiritual blessings to the person ordained, we turn to the word of God.

It is simply a fact that in every instance recorded in the Bible of the imposition of hands, or the extension of hands, accompanied with prayer, the supposition or assumption on the part of all concerned was, not that the act was merely an impressive human ritual, but that there was also something, either good or bad, either bane or benediction, actually and really imparted. "Imposition of hands," says the Rev. Frederick Meyrick, M. A. (*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. ii., p. 242), "is a natural form by which benediction has been expressed in all ages and among all people. It is the act of one superior, either by age or spiritual position, towards an inferior, and by its very form it appears to bestow some gift, or to manifest a desire that some gift should be bestowed. It may be an evil thing that is symbolically bestowed, as when guiltiness was thus transferred by the high priest to the scape-goat from the congregation (Lev. xvi. 21); but in general the gift is something good which God is supposed to bestow by the channel of the laying on of hands. Thus, in the Old Testament, Jacob accompanies his blessing to Ephraim and Manasseh with imposition of hands (Gen. xlviii. 14); Joshua is ordained in the room of Moses by imposition of hands

(Numb. xxvii. 18; Deut. xxxiv. 9); cures seem to have been wrought by the prophets by the imposition of hands (2 Kings v. 11); and the high priest giving his solemn benediction stretched out his hands over the people (Lev. ix. 22). The same form was used by our Lord in blessing, and occasionally in healing, and it was plainly regarded by the Jews as customary or befitting (Matt. xix. 13; Mark viii. 23; x. 16). One of the promises also, at the end of St. Mark's Gospel, to Christ's followers, is that they should cure the sick by laying on of hands (Mark xvi. 18); and accordingly we find that Saul received his sight (Acts ix. 17), and Publius' father was healed of his fever (Acts xxviii. 8) by imposition of hands."

Tracing, then, the history of the laying on of hands, as we find it recorded in the Scriptures, there was evidently, all along in its history, the supposition or belief that there was, through or by it, an actual *impartation* of something, a going forth or communication of either positive blessing or curse, a production of some real and true result.

In further confirmation of this, and especially in connection with the laying on of hands as part of the ceremony of induction into the ministerial office, let us examine carefully the precise sense of several texts bearing directly upon the subject.

Let us examine, first, the text (Numb. xxvii. 18) in which Moses is commanded to ordain Joshua as his successor. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him." By some it is maintained that here there could evidently have been no communication of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands, since it is explicitly asserted that Joshua already possessed the Spirit, and because of his possession of him he was thus selected and ordained. "In whom is the spirit." Thus one writer (*McClintock and Strong*, vol. iv., p. 58) says: "Here it is obvious that the laying on of hands did neither originate nor communicate divine gifts, for Joshua had 'the spirit' before he received imposition of hands."

But, in opposition to this interpretation of the text, we deny that the Hebrew word *Ruach* here signifies the Holy Spirit as one of the Persons of the Trinity, or that there is any reference whatever in the use of the term to any supernatural or gracious work wrought by the Holy Ghost in the character of Joshua. The term evidently has reference only to the *natural* endowments of

Joshua, the spirit of prudence, of courage, of energy, of force and decision of character which he was endowed with, and which naturally fitted him for the leadership of the people. "Understanding,"—"insight"—"courage"—are the meanings given of the word, as it here stands in this text, by Fuerst in his Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon. Hence the expression "in whom is the spirit," does not mean "in whom is the *Holy Spirit*," but simply that in him was a natural spirit, or natural elements of character, fitting him, when once quickened and directed by the Holy Ghost, and supplemented by still other and higher gifts and graces, to be the leader of the Israelitish nation. In his ordination, by the laying on of Moses' hands, the Holy Spirit added to these natural elements of character, or this natural spirit, such other spiritual elements and power as might still be needed in order entirely to qualify him for the right discharge of the duties of his position. Or, as Bush (*in loco*) remarks: "By this ceremony of the imposition of hands was signified the transfer of the office of leader of Israel from Moses to Joshua, and the communication of the requisite spiritual gifts and endowments for its right discharge;" corresponding with what is plainly taught in the parallel passage (Deut. xxxiv. 9): "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, *for* Moses had laid his hand upon him."

But, in further confirmation of this truth that in the laying on of hands in ordination there is an actual communication, to the person ordained, of a spiritual gift or power from the Holy Ghost, of some character, let us examine the two passages in Paul's letters to Timothy upon the subject. "Neglect not the gift (*μὴ ἀμέλει τοῦ ἐν σοὶ χάρισματος*) that is in thee, which was given (*ὃ ἐδόθη σοι*) thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," (1 Tim. iv. 14). "Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands (*δι' ἣν αἰτίαν ἀναμνησκω σε ἀναζωπυρεῖν τὸ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐν σοὶ διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν μου*). The word *χάρισμα* which in both these texts is translated "gifts," and which in each designates something conferred in or through the laying on of hands, occurs, says Ellicott (1 Tim. iv. 14) "with the exception of 1 Peter iv. 19, only in St. Paul's Epistles, where it is found as many as fourteen times, and in all cases denotes a gift emanating from the Holy Spirit or the free grace of God. Here probably, as the context suggests, it principally refers to the

gifts of παρακλήσις and διδασκαλία just specified. The parallel passage (2 Tim. i. 6) clearly develops the force of the preposition (ἀναζωπυρεῖν): the χάρισμα is as a spark of holy fire within him which he is not to let die out from want of attention." Again: "The ἐπίθεσις χειρῶν or χειροθεσία was a symbolic action, the outward sign of an inward communication of the Holy Spirit for some spiritual office (Acts vi. 6), or undertaking (Acts xiii. 3) implied or expressed." And again: "Prophecy and imposition of hands were the two co-existent circumstances which make up the whole process, by the medium of which the χάρισμα was imparted." (*Ellicott* on 1 Tim. iv. 14.) Bloomfield's comment on the passage (1 Tim. iv. 14) is as follows: "Notwithstanding that this must chiefly allude to the spiritual *gifts* which Timothy had received, it may include the ordinary *graces* of the Spirit, by which his endowments in learning would be sanctified. These were given δια προφητείας, *i. e.* according to prophecy; of which the passage (i. 18) is the best commentary," prophecies probably which some of the New Testament prophets had uttered concerning Timothy before he was put into the ministry. The comments of Wiessinger (*Olshausen's Commentary, in loc.*, vol. vi., p. 113) on these two related or parallel texts (1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6) are very full, and, in our judgment, very judicious and correct. Χάρισμα, he says, "denotes the gift of the divine Spirit, that gift which qualifies him (Timothy) for the preaching of the Gospel, for the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. iv. 5) and which he had to make use of at present in the service of a particular church. On the ἐν σοί, compare 2 Tim. i. 6, where the gift is represented as a spark of the Spirit lying within him, the kindling of which depends on the will of him on whom the gift is bestowed. So here, also, the use of the χάρισμα is made to depend on the will of Timothy. \* \* \* With respect to the *laying on of hands*, compare Acts; xiii. 3, where we read that hands were laid in prayer on the apostle Paul and on Barnabas, by the prophets and teachers at Antioch, in order to separate them *for the work* to which they were called, Acts vi. 6, where we read that, in like manner, hands were laid in prayer by the apostles on the newly elected deacons, in order to impart to them the gift of the Spirit for their ministry. It is in every case an appropriation of the gift of the Spirit in prayer, through the instrumentality of others, for a definite object, for a *work* which is undertaken, or a service which is entered upon, whether this service be marked out



in a standing office or not." Again, on 2 Tim. i. 6, he remarks: "But, what does this χάρισμα denote? The term itself in its wide signification (Rom. i. 11; v. 15, vi. 23; ix. 29, comp. with xii. 6. 1 Cor. xii. 4, seq.) leaves it undecided; yet we may perhaps determine it from the connection, as verses 6 and 7 manifestly introduce verse 8 seq. (οὖν) and from the comparison of 1 Tim. iv. 14, and i. 18. As there χάρισμα can be understood only of his definite gift for the vocation of teacher, so also here. And the whole tenor of the epistle (to which verse 6 is, as it were, the key) points to Timothy's vocation as a teacher, not to his Christian deportment, the οἱ ἦν αἰτίαν of verse 6 in fact, assuming his *faith* as ground of the admonition to fidelity in his official calling. The reference is not to the gift of the Spirit in general, but to the specific gift requisite for his calling; and this not, with Mack, that of *government*, but that of *evangelist*. So also Olshausen. The relative clause 'which is in thee,' etc., refers to the same act as in 1 Tim. iv. 14, viz.: Timothy's reception of his evangelical calling by prophecy and imposition of hands. Regarding, as every unprejudiced person must do, the two passages as having a like reference, we see how groundlessly this setting apart is regarded as a consecration of Timothy to the bishopric of Ephesus, a formal inauguration to the office of priest or bishop. To any *presiding* over the Ephesian Church, or over any other Church, there is here not the slightest allusion." Dr. Van Oosterzee, on the first of these texts (1 Tim. iv. 14), remarks: "At his entrance on the office of teacher, Timothy received by the Holy Ghost, a special gift of high value in the exercise of his office. The office itself is not here denoted, but his divine qualification for the office, which was given through (διὰ) prophecy with the laying on of hands of the elders" (*Lange's Com. in loco*). And again, on 2 Tim. i. 6, he remarks: "The Apostles here, as 1 Tim. iv. 14, alludes to the gift of the calling (Lehrberuf) received from God, and addresses Timothy not as a Christian simply, but chiefly as teacher."

Bearing in mind what these eminent biblical critics thus express, it appears, therefore, to us clear that in the ordination of Timothy by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, of which the apostle was one, there was, in that solemn transaction, communicated to him, by the Holy Ghost, as a special gift or χάρισμα, above what he before or without such ordination possessed, not sacramental or miraculous and divine power such as Romanists claim that ordination confers,



but special moral or spiritual power, with special regard to the distinctive work of a religious teacher or Christian minister and pastor to which he was then and there thus consecrated; a special impartation indeed of the Holy Ghost himself, by which, if he would subsequently avail himself rightly of this presence and offered power of the Holy Ghost within him, the natural endowments which he possessed would be quickened into new and increasing activity and effectiveness, and his utterance of the truth be clothed with resistless power over the hearts and consciences of men. In a word, in his ordination, through the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, the Holy Ghost was so communicated to him as, in all respects, to qualify him for the right and for the successful exercise of the functions of the ministerial office.

Nor do we here, for a moment, in thus asserting that the Holy Ghost was imparted in ordination to Timothy by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, attach any magical or *ex opere operato* power to the mere manual or tactual act itself. The Holy Ghost is not imparted because the hands of the presbytery are thus imposed, nor through that even as a necessary outward and material medium, but he is imparted, we still hold, in connection with it, and as God's answer to the prayers and faith in the promises of his word which his Church there in that solemn hour pours out before him.

And this even Gerhard (xii., b. 168), although, as seems to us, quite inconsistently, admits. "We do not deny," is his language, "that, in ordination, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, necessary for the discharge of the duties of the ministry of the Church, are conferred and increased; yet meanwhile," he adds, "we make a distinction between the grace of reconciliation, or of the remission of sins, and the grace of ordination, since many receive the grace of ordination who nevertheless do not receive the grace of reconciliation; secondly, we say that the bestowal and increase of the gifts necessary for the ministry, are by no means to be ascribed to the laying on of the hands as a sacramental symbol truly so called, and divinely appointed, but to the prayers of the Church and the presbytery, to which the promise of hearing has been attached."

But, if in the case of Timothy there was such impartation, in the act of ordination, of the Holy Ghost, then also, we have every reason to think, is there now in the case of all who, possessing the requisite natural gifts and Christian character, present themselves to

the ministerium or presbytery, as the proper official organ of the Church, and at their hands receive ordination. In all essential respects, the cases are the same.

We like, upon this whole subject, the views of Martensen (*Christian Dogmatics*, sect. 272), who says: "In the Lutheran Church preachers are ordained according to the apostolic method by laying on of the hands of the brethren—an emblem of the bestowment of spiritual gifts—yet we cannot rank priestly ORDERS on the same footing with the sacraments properly so called, and we cannot suppose that extraordinary gifts are connected therewith, as they were in the apostles' times. And, withal, as little can we suppose that ordination is a mere ceremony in which *nothing* is conferred. For the office appointed by the Lord, in its very idea, seems to include a *power* and *authority* from the Lord himself, and must, *to a certain extent*, be accompanied with the promises that were in an extraordinary manner fulfilled in the case of the apostles and evangelists whom our Lord sent forth. 'I will give you,' said Christ, 'a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist,' (Luke xxi. 15). From this authority, resting in the office as coming from the Lord himself, appointing the preacher as servant, not of the Church only, but of the Lord, is developed the special priestly gift of performing the service for the building up of the fellowship, and of preaching words of warning and of comfort; a gift and an anointing that cannot be found in an orderly manner among those who lack that authority, because they possess only a subjective or human call. Although the Lutheran Church has not ventured to propound a dogma regarding priestly ordination, owing to a certain fear of the hierarchical principle, the faith nevertheless exists within her pale, that ordination is *more* than a mere ceremony, as it is also the express witness of faithful ministers, that they have ever derived new strength and energy for the work of their office *in their ordination*. It is evident that the gift of grace, lying hid in the office, does not always appear in power, but depends for its activity upon faith and continued personal and ethical endeavor. 'Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.' What is true regarding the administration of the sacrament, that it must be conditional upon the inner state of the receiver, holds good also of

ordination. It must be given to him only who possesses the inner preparation and the due qualifications for the office, and hence also Paul warns Timothy not to lay hands suddenly on any man."

But, apart from what ordination thus is in itself, it may also be considered *as the act of the Church*. As such it is, first, an act of *recognition*; in which the Church recognizes and acknowledges the applicant to possess the required scriptural qualifications for the office of the ministry. It is, secondly, an act of *committing* or *entrusting*. The Church has a divine mission; she has precious possessions and interests; she has solemn and blessed means of grace. That mission is the glory of Christ in the sanctification of the Church and the conversion of the world. Those possessions and interests are all the various activities and institutions by which she is seeking to secure and promote that glory. And those means of grace are the word and blessed sacraments. And all these, in the act of ordination, the Church gives over, as a sacred trust, to be cared for and defended and helped, in every possible way, by him whom she thus ordains. The divine word *e. g.*, she gives into his hands, and bids him preach it in its purity and with all fidelity. The holy sacraments she entrusts to him and charges him rightly to administer them. Her history she gives him to study, to be inspired by, and to respect; her polity to know, esteem, and obey; her pure doctrine to understand, love, and, even at the peril of his life, to proclaim and defend; her institutions of learning to cherish and support; her literature to read and circulate; her system and schools of education to sustain and improve; her cause of missions and the world's evangelization to plead and pray for; all these interests, which are the interests of the kingdom of Christ, the Church, and Christ also through the Church, in that act of ordination, give over, as their solemn trust, to him whom they thus induct into the ministry. Thus Paul wrote to Timothy (2 Tim. i. 14), "That good thing which was *committed* unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us;" and in another place: "O Timothy, keep that which is *committed* to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing, have erred concerning the faith" (1 Tim. vi. 20-21.) But thirdly, ordination, as the act of the Church, is an act also of *delegation* and *spiritual subjection*. She delegates to him authority to exercise in her midst the functions of the ministerial office. She com-

missions him, in the name of her ascended Lord, to preach the word and to administer the sacraments. And she places herself under his spiritual tuition and rule, recognizing him as the ambassador of Christ, and pledging herself to receive from his mouth and hands the word and sacraments as from the very mouth and hands of Christ himself, even as Christ also declares: "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me" (Matt. x. 40); or as the apostle declares: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20); or, as he writes to the Hebrews (xiii. 17), "*Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.*" And hence, while ministers are not a separate and superior *order*, and are not to "*be lord over God's heritage,*" (1 Peter v. 3) their office still invests them with authority, and the duty of the Church is to acknowledge and submit herself obediently to that authority, in so far as its exercise harmonizes with the principles of the word of God.

But ordination, we yet remark, may also be considered as *the act of the person receiving it, or of the person ordained*. As such it is a solemn act of entire consecration, if it be God's will, for life, to the special work of the ministry. Inwardly moved to it by the Holy Ghost, and now outwardly called to it by the voice of the Church, he, in the act of ordination, devotes himself, in most solemn covenant, henceforth, with all his time and power, to the one sublime work of promoting the glory of Christ in the exercise of the functions of the ministerial office. It is a personal consecration; a consecration of the whole man, body, mind, soul; a consecration to the one single but grand work of the gospel ministry; a consecration to it until death. Hence, whilst not believing in any priestly "*character indelibilis*" imparted in ordination, and whilst believing that demission of the ministerial office is under certain circumstances both justifiable and obligatory, we yet hold that for any one, with suitable gifts, once ordained to the ministry, and physically and mentally capable to discharge its duties, for the mere sake of gain to turn aside and engage in purely secular pursuits, is a great and soul-endangering sin. And yet how many men there are in our land to-day, who, while still retaining the official prefix of "*Reverend,*"



and retaining it and publishing it as so much capital in trade, although in health and able, were their hearts right, to do good work for Christ in the ministry, are engaged in all kinds of merely secular and worldly vocations; so that with the good lay brother out West the whole Church may to-day well pray: "From all ministerial land speculators, from all reverend life-insurance agents, from all clerical pill-peddlers and patent medicine venders, from all ordained storekeepers and agriculturists, Good Lord, deliver us!"

And sinful also, beyond expression, is it for those who have once, in ordination, solemnly consecrated themselves to the work of the ministry, forgetful of their solemn ordination vows, then afterward with only half heart and with but feeble devotion, to prosecute that work. So morally great is the work of the ministry in itself; so solemn are the promises made in the assumption of the office; so dependent the prosperity of the Church and the conversion of the world upon its faithful prosecution; so responsible for the loss of immortal souls who perish through ministerial indifference or negligence; so capable, with God's blessing upon the preached truth, to reach and change multitudes into the image of Christ, and be the means of bringing them to the enjoyment of Christ and heaven forever; and so rapidly hastening, as both preacher and hearer are, to that august judgment throne where we shall all be adjudged guilty or guiltless of the blood of each other's souls; oh, how earnest, how entirely consecrated to his work, how fervent and unwearied and burning with zeal; yea, what a very flame of holy fire should every minister of the gospel be! Of Richard Baxter it is said: "When he spoke of weighty soul concerns, you might find his very spirit drenched therein." Paul writes to the Romans: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed (separated) from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." And our Saviour himself, unwavering in his devotion to the unselfish and sublime work of saving souls to which he had given himself, exclaims; "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." In each how full, how entire, the consecration! How steadfast and earnest and self-consuming their zeal! How true, in all things, to their ministerial call! Oh, that all who preach the word had such a spirit! Oh, that all who bear the vessels of the



Lord were also thus entirely consecrated to their holy and blessed work!

In now closing our discussion of this subject of the *Call to the Ministry*, we know of no more fitting thought or language with which to do so, than we find in the following "*Suspirium*" with which Hollazius (*De Ministerio Ecclesiastico*) concludes his able discussion of the same:

"Te, Deus, Pater omnis boni ordinis, Auctor ministerii sacri, sinceris humillimisque precibus obtestor, ut Hierarchiam tuam Ecclesiasticam, quam mortalium commodo sapientissime instituisti, adversus fremitum orbis et orci integram et incorruptam conserves! Da ministris tuis plantantibus et rigantibus incrementum uberrimum! Da etiam mihi ministro tuo infirmo os et sapientiam; confer dona sanctificantia; adde animum imperterritum; largire prosperos officii successus, ut ad præscriptum verbi tui recte doceam, Sacramenta rite dispensem, pie vivam, et ex hac vita tanquam ex hospitio, non tanquam ex domo, Te jubente, placide discedam."

## ARTICLE XV.

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# HUMAN ORDINANCES IN THE CHURCH.

BY S. A. HOLMAN, D. D.

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THE Fifteenth Article of the Augsburg Confession relates to rites and ordinances of human authority in the Church. The Latin, German and English texts of this article are as follows :

### XV. DE RITIBUS ECCLESIASTICIS.

De ritibus ecclesiasticis docent, quod ritus illi servandi sint, qui sine peccato servari possunt, et prosunt ad tranquillitatem et bonum ordinem in ecclesia, sicut certae feriae, festa et similia. De talibus rebus tamen admonentur homines, ne conscientiae onerentur, tanquam talis cultus ad salutem neccessarius sit. Admonentur etiam, quod traditiones humanae institutae ad placandum Deum, ad promerendam gratiam, et satisfaciendum pro peccatis adversentur evangelio et doctrinae fidei. Quare vota et traditiones de cibis et diebus, etc., institutae ad promerendam gratiam et satisfaciendum pro peccatis inutiles sint et contra evangelium.\*

### XV. VON KIRCHENORDNUNGEN.

Von Kirchenordnung, von Menschen gemacht, lehret man diejenigen halten, so ohne Sünde mögen gehalten werden, und zu Frieden, und zu guter Ordnung in der Kirchen dienen, als gewisse Feier, Festa, und dergleichen. Doch geschieht Unterricht dabei, dasz man die Gewissen nicht damit beschweren soll, als sei solch Ding nöthig zur Seligkeit. Darüber wird gelehret, dasz alle Satzungen und Tradition, von Menschen dazu gemacht, dasz man dadurch Gott versühne, und Gnad verdiene, dem Evangelio und der Lehre vom Glauben an Christum entgegen seind; derhalben sein Klostergelübde und andere Tradition von Unterschied der Speise, Tag, etc., dadurch man vermeint Gnade zu verdienen, und für Sünde gnug zu thun, untüchtig und wider das Evangelium.\*

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\* Müller, Symbolischen Bücher.

## XV. OF ECCLESIASTICAL RITES.

Concerning Ecclesiastical Rites, they teach, that those rites are to be observed which may be observed without sin, and are profitable for tranquillity and good order in the Church; such as are set holidays, feasts and such like. Yet concerning such things, men are to be admonished, that consciences are not to be burdened as if such service were necessary to salvation. They are also to be admonished that human traditions, instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace and make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of faith. Wherefore vows and traditions concerning foods and days and such like, instituted to merit grace and make satisfaction for sins, are useless and contrary to the Gospel.\*

The term "ecclesiastical rites," is employed in a more restricted sense than is the phrase "Church Ordinances instituted by men," which is derived from the German text. A "rite" conveys the idea of a ceremonial act, an "ordinance," that of an established law relating to any usage or opinion. Hence the theme and the scope of the present lecture may be indicated by the title: *Human Ordinances in the Church*.

## THE DIVINE AND HUMAN FACTORS IN THE CONSTITUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH.

In the Seventh Article of the Augsburg Confession, it is taught that the Christian Church exists and develops through the administration of ordinances which are of *divine* origin and obligation. "The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the gospel is rightly taught, and the sacraments rightly administered." Those who appropriate the salvation imparted through these external means of grace properly constitute the Church, although "in this life, hypocrites and evil persons are mingled with it." Therefore the primary essential factor in the constitution and development of the Church, is the grace of God, operating through his divinely appointed means. When man becomes the recipient of divine grace he is called to labor together with God in the development of the Church. Human agency, though not coördinate with the divine, is nevertheless an essential factor. As in the sphere of providence, the human must coöperate with the divine, so in the sphere of divine grace there must be a human agency to work together with God.

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\* C. P. Krauth's "Augsburg Confession, literally translated from the original Latin." 1868.

As the divine word was revealed to our race, not immediately to each individual soul, but "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," so now it is necessary that man should administer the means of grace which God provides, in order that the Church may exist and develop on earth. The service of man in mediating salvation through the Church, includes not only the administration of the objective means of grace; it likewise requires the manifestation of his own subjective views, and the exercise of his own finite powers. Man, originally created in the image of God, that he might reflect the character and the work of his Creator, lost, in his fall, the ability to realize the great end of his existence; but under the Gospel he is enabled to "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him," and thus regenerated he finds the highest and noblest exercise of his intellect, sensibilities and will, in the development of the visible Church. God has thus put man into a garden of greater glory and value than Eden, "to dress it and to keep it."

#### NECESSITY OF HUMAN ORDINANCES.

The necessity and the sphere of human ordinances in the Church, especially appear in the consideration that the end of the ceremonial usages of the Old Testament, respecting persons, things, places and times, having been fulfilled by the advent and atonement of Christ, those ordinances are no longer necessary nor binding upon the Church. The dispersion of the Jews, and the destruction of their temple, where it was necessary to administer many of their ceremonial laws, indicate this fact; but it is expressly taught in scripture that "the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary; but Christ being come, an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, obtained eternal redemption," Heb. ix. 1, 11, 12. To the Christians at Colosse, who were perplexed by the opinion of some that the Church was yet bound by the ceremonial laws of Moses, the apostle writes: "Let no man judge you in meat or drink," cf. Lev. vii. 10-27; x. 9; Num. vi. 3; "or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ," Col. ii. 16. The restrictions upon the freedom of human agency, under the Old Testament, were required by the typical character of the covenant and the low attainments of the chosen

people in their apprehension of the divine plan of salvation. The ceremonial ordinances of the Old Testament, like its moral laws, were designed as a schoolmaster to lead to Christ. If numerous specific usages and ceremonial laws had been divinely ordained in the New Testament, as they were in the Old, the fundamental doctrine of the sufficiency of the atonement of Christ would be greatly obscured. But the abrogation of the ceremonial usages of the Old Testament, and the absence of divinely ordained rites and usages for the regulation of worship, government or discipline, in the New Testament, necessarily require the exercise of the subjective powers of man. All organizations must have modes of existence and forms of development. Hence those who constitute the visible Church, are not only at liberty but under obligation to ordain such rites and usages, as are necessary to formulate its worship, to constitute and administer its government, and to establish its doctrines. A preliminary principle in the Formula of Government and Discipline of the General Synod is that "as Jesus Christ has left no entire specific form of government and discipline for his Church, it is the duty of every individual church to adopt such regulations as appear to it most consistent with the spirit and precepts of the New Testament, and best calculated to subserve the interests of the Church of Christ," ch. 1, sec. 5. This principle illustrates the doctrine which is expressed in the first clause of the Fifteenth Article of the Confession, viz.: that "ecclesiastical rites are to be observed." The liberty and obligation of the Church are indeed subject to the higher law of the divine word, which restricts the sphere of the human agency to the institution of such ordinances as "may be observed without sin, and are profitable for tranquillity and good order in the Church." The Apology of the Confession (VIII.) says, "Our adversaries agree to the first part of the Fifteenth Article, in which we say that the ceremonies and ordinances which can be kept conscientiously, without sin, and which promote order and tranquillity, should be observed in the Church!"

#### DIVERSITY IN THE INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES WHICH REGULATE HUMAN ORDINANCES IN THE CHURCH.

Whilst, however, there is this unanimity of opinion respecting the divine authority of these principles which regulate human ordinances in the Church, we shall presently see, in the consideration of



particular human ordinances, how various and discordant are the views of men with regard to their meaning and application. In reference to the principle that human ordinances must be observed without sin, it is indeed manifest and universally admitted in the church, that in any conflict of authority between divine law and human ordinances, we ought to obey God rather than men; yet there is much diversity of opinion whether human ordinances and usages, which are now established in many portions of the Church, are transgressions of positive precepts or just inferences from the divine word—actual transgression being “every action, whether external or internal, which conflicts with the law of God.”

In like manner we find diversity of views respecting the interpretation and application of the divinely ordained principles of “tranquillity and good order,” which also regulate human ordinances in the Church. Concord in the visible Church is enjoined by the divine word: “Be at peace among yourselves,” 1 Thess. v. 13. “Follow peace with all,” Heb. xii. 14. But what is peace in the Church? When Christ says: “I came not to send peace, but a sword,” Matt. x. 34, he not only proclaims the irrepressible conflict between truth and error, but he discriminates between a true and fictitious peace in the Church. Good order is likewise a positive purpose of human ordinances in the Church, according to the divine precept: “Let all things be done decently and in order,” 1 Cor. xiv. 40. The divine will conforms to this principle which binds the human agency in the development of the Church. “God is not the author of confusion,” 1 Cor. xiv. 33. Indeed order, as a manifestation of law, pervades the entire government of God. “Order is Heaven’s first law.” As God has bound the operation of his own power, so has He that of man, to laws, by which all things in heaven and earth are created and controlled. The well-known words of Richard Hooker, in the closing paragraph (8) of his first book on “Ecclesiastical Polity,” may appropriately be recalled: “Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage; the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power. Both angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.” But whilst the principle of good order is generally recognized as a

divine precept, the protracted and oftentimes violent controversy with respect to various rites and usages of the Church, attests that there is no uniformity of judgment as to the right application of that principle in the cultus of the Church. As the various creeds of Christendom arise, not from any diversity of view respecting the authority of the objective word, but from the diversity of subjective apprehension of the word; so human ordinances in the Church, respecting modes of worship and forms of government, differ, not because there is no general acceptance of the principles of the supreme authority of the word and its divine precepts enjoining tranquillity and good order in the Church, but because the judgments of men differ in regard to their meaning and application. Our Article, therefore, in the *second place*, exhibits this truth, viz.: that whilst there is an agreement between the confessors and their adversaries, respecting the designation of principles which must regulate human ordinances, yet there is no agreement with the Roman Church, on the one hand, nor with the Reformed Churches, on the other, respecting the interpretation and application of these principles to specific human ordinances in the Church. There is indeed no antithesis, or condemnatory clause to the Fifteenth Article, such as is found in eight of the fourteen preceding Articles of the Confession. There is no designation of adversaries, as Romanists or Anabaptists; and Burger in his "Evangelischer Glaube" commenting on this Article, says that "a special antithesis is omitted out of forbearance in the Augustana, because it would only have been pointed against the Papists."\* But whilst we can perceive throughout the Confession a studied forbearance to irritate the Romanists, there is no hesitation, in the Fifteenth Article, to condemn the error of any adversary.

#### ERROR OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES.

The Fifteenth Article of the Confession, in its truly conservative and scriptural interpretation and application of the principles of the supremacy of the divine word, and of its precepts enjoining tranquillity and good order, in the regulation of human ordinances in the Church, points, not only against the Papists, but anticipates the

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\* Eine besondere Antithese ist aber dennoch aus Schonung in der Augustana weggelassen, weil sie nur gegen die Papisten würdiger gerichtet gewesen sein.—Vol. 2, p. 196.

error of most of the Reformed Churches which subsequently separated from the Evangelical Confession. In the first place, our Article maintains that "set holidays, feasts, and such like, are to be observed." In this specific application of the principles which regulate human ordinances, it cannot be said that it "points against the Papists;" for they observe "set holidays, feasts and such like;" but, in this respect, it does point against the the Anabaptists of the time of the Reformation, and against most of the Reformed Churches which subsequently arose, and which discarded "set holidays, feasts, and such like," on the ground that a right interpretation and application of the principles regulating human ordinances in the Church, did not sanction their observance. This reference to those who, in abandoning the errors of the Romanists in their false interpretation and application of these principles, nevertheless swung to an opposite extreme and discarded also the truly conservative interpretation of the Evangelical Lutheran Confession relative to Church ordinances, is thus represented by Prof. Zöckler, in his work "Die Augsburgische Confession," p. 256: "The attitude of our Confession, so far as it holds fast to these elements of ritual-tradition—always only in a form determined and purified according to the Scriptures—is opposed to all subjectivism and unchurchly radicalism. It takes a decided position against that iconoclastic zeal and that rude breaking with Christian history which characterizes most Reformed Churches and sects."\* He then specifies "the Scottish Presbyterians as having removed all ecclesiastical festivals except Sunday," and the Zwinglians in Switzerland, as having stricken "churchly anniversaries, except the chief yearly festivals, from the calendar, and therewith have banished from the Church, bells, organs, altars, pictures, and crucifixes, the customary order of pericopes, and liturgical forms of prayer; all these in supposed following of apostolic example and precept, but in truth moved by a spirit of abstract, un-historical radicalism, and of an overstrained zeal, even to an iconoclastic extreme, against real or only imaginary idolatry in the Church."

In the Directory for the public worship of God, which was drawn up by the Westminster Assembly, and accepted by the Church of

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\* Sie kерт sich mit Entschiedenheit gegen jenen bilderstürmerischen Eifer und jenes schroffe Brechen mit der christlichen Geschichte, welches die meisten reformirten Kirchen und Secten characterisirt.

Scotland in 1645, there is an appendix which declares that festival days, vulgarly called holidays, having no warrant in the word of God, are not to be continued; nevertheless, it is lawful and necessary upon special and emergent occasions, to separate a day or days for public fasting or thanksgiving, as the several eminent and extraordinary dispensations of God's providence shall administer cause and opportunity to his people. Cf. Art. "Festivals," by Rev. J. S. Black, *Ency. Brit.*, 9th ed.

#### ERROR OF THE ROMAN CHURCH.

But if the Fifteenth Article of the Confession declares against the false interpretation and application of the principles which regulate human ordinances, as represented in most Reformed Churches, equally decided is its protest against the false interpretation and application of these principles by the Roman Church. Indeed, this Article illustrates the chief controversy between the Roman and the Evangelical Lutheran Churches. For the Roman Church at the time of the Reformation attached a justifying merit to the observance of human ordinances and traditions, as it does to this day. Therefore, according to the Evangelical Church, the Roman Church violated the principle that only such human ordinances should be observed "which may be observed without sin." It is clearly in opposition to the ordinances and usages of the Roman Church that the concluding and greater portion of the Fifteenth Article of the Confession teaches this doctrine, viz.: "Men are to be admonished that human traditions instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace and make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of faith. Wherefore vows and traditions concerning foods and days, and such like, instituted to merit grace and make satisfaction for sins, are useless and contrary to the Gospel." That the Roman Church teaches justification by works enjoined by human ordinances, as well as by faith in Christ, is manifest from the following canons of the Council of Trent:

"If any one saith that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake; or that this confidence, alone, is that whereby we are justified; let him be anathema." Sess. 14, Can. 12.

"If any one saith that satisfaction for sins, as to their temporal punishment, is nowise made to God, through the merits of Jesus

Christ, by the punishments inflicted by him, and patiently borne, or by those enjoined by the priest, nor even by those voluntarily undertaken, by fastings, prayers, alms-deeds, or by other works also of piety; and that therefore the best penance is merely a new life; let him be anathema." Sess. 14, Can. 13.

"If any one saith that the satisfactions by which penitents redeem their sins through Jesus Christ, are not a worship of God, but traditions of men which obscure the doctrines of grace, and the true worship of God, and the benefit itself of the death of Christ; let him be anathema." Sess. 14, Can. 14.

Corresponding to this doctrine of good works, the Roman Church institutes ordinances and usages, such as monastic vows, fastings, difference of meats, observance of days, pilgrimages, penances, indulgences, rosaries, auricular confession, celibacy, extreme unction, worship of saints, etc. That Church maintains that one by such means appeases God and merits grace, and that the observance of these ordinances, from such motives and with such an object, does not in the least contradict the Gospel and the doctrine of faith in Christ. But with such a view of the value of human ordinances, they cannot be observed without sin. The evangelical doctrine as declared in our Article, teaches that human "traditions \* \* instituted to merit grace and make satisfaction for sin, are useless and contrary to the Gospel." The Apology of the Confession (VIII.) characterizes such a view of human ordinances, as "evidently a Jewish principle, in fact a suppression of the Gospel by the doctrine of the devil." Paul condemns it in speaking of those who "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God," Rom. x. 3. Christ rebukes it when he says, "in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," Matt. xv. 9. The doctrine of justification by faith alone, is the subject of the Fourth Article of the Augsburg Confession. The doctrine of good works as the will of God and the fruit of faith, is the subject of the Sixth Article of the Confession. The doctrine of the relation between faith and good works, is the subject of the Twentieth Article. Hence, as the nature and value of good works are thus completely considered in other Articles of the Confession, it is not designed in the consideration of our Article to discuss particularly the doctrine of the merit of good works. This doctrine is



introduced into the Fifteenth Article, in order to define the negative aspect of human ordinances in the Church, viz.: that they are not designed to propitiate God,<sup>1</sup> to merit his favor, or to make satisfaction for sins.

#### POSITIVE DOCTRINE OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH.

Therefore it is the positive doctrine taught in this Article which especially claims our attention, viz.: that human ordinances "are to be observed which may be observed without sin, and are profitable for tranquillity and good order in the Church." The right interpretation and application of these principles to specific human ordinances in the Church have their source, (1) in the science of hermeneutics, with respect to the correct apprehension of the divine word, by which it is determined whether they are observed without sin; (2) to the science of ethics, with respect to the determination of that which is right as the condition of true tranquillity; and (3) to the science of æsthetics, with respect to the determination of that which is beautiful, harmonious, and appropriate, as essential elements in the law of good order. Through these sciences the intuitive conceptions or ideas of the human mind, respecting the true, the good and the beautiful, are educated into a correct knowledge of that which is right and wrong in human ordinances. Conceding the right of private judgment to all, and disavowing an absolute infallibility in her own conclusions, the Evangelical Lutheran Church nevertheless holds that she has been educated into a correct understanding and application of the principles which rightly regulate human ordinances in the Church. Her position amid the various subjective views of men, may, on the one hand, be called radical, in opposing the fundamental error of the Roman Church, which attaches a justifying merit to their observance; and, on the other hand, it may be called conservative, in contrast with the unchurchly views and practices of those Reformed denominations which ascribe to their observance idolatry, superstition, or insignificance.

#### SPECIFIC HUMAN ORDINANCES.

If we now consider specific human ordinances in the Church, we observe in the Fifteenth Article that mention is made only of "set holidays, feasts and such like." The Variata, 1540 (42), in place of "feasts and such like," supplies, "certain devotional hymns and

other similar rites," (*certæ cantiones piae et alii similes ritus*). The Apology of the Augsburg Confession (VIII.) says: "the three chief festivals, Sunday, and the like, which were established for the sake of order, union and peace, we cheerfully observe." It also mentions a local customary "every Sunday observance of the Lord's Supper;" it regards with special favor the custom of catechisation; it condemns the adversaries for neglecting the preaching of the word in many countries during the whole year, except only in Lent. In the Twenty-sixth Article of the Augsburg Confession it is said, "many ceremonies and traditions are observed by us, such as Mass [not however in the sense of the Roman Church, but in the sense of necessary ceremonies attending the evangelical administration of the Lord's Supper], singing of hymns, festivals, etc., which are calculated to promote order in the Church." Thus we observe that "holidays and festivals," are prominent in the Confession and its Apology, as human ordinances rightly instituted in the Church. They are prominent because the administration of the means of grace, the public worship of God, and the commemoration of sacred events in the planting of the Christian Church, necessarily require stated times for their observance; and because different opinions existed respecting the nature and necessity of the festivals of the Church.

All specific human ordinances in the Church may, however, be included in the following classification, viz.:

- I. TIMES OF DIVINE SERVICE.
- II. MODES OF DIVINE SERVICE.
- III. THE CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT.
- IV. THE CONSERVATION OF THE FAITH.

The limits assigned to this lecture compel a brief and, on that account, somewhat unsatisfactory consideration and discussion, even of the prominent specific human ordinances under each of the foregoing classes.

\* I. TIMES OF DIVINE SERVICE.

The principles regulating human ordinances in the Church are to be applied to the times of divine service.

*a. The Lord's Day: Ground of Obligation for its Observance.* Of most frequent occurrence, and of chief importance among the holidays and festivals, is the weekly observance of the Lord's day.

Here, however, at the threshold of our view of special ordinances in the Church, we meet a somewhat perplexing question, viz.: what is the ground of the obligation to observe the Lord's day? If that day is to be observed because of a divine command that at least one day in seven shall be devoted to holy use, as distinct from secular use, then this divine appointment involves essentially the ceremonial element of the Jewish Sabbath, and hence it does not pertain to human ordinances to designate the proportion of time which shall be devoted to holy use. Yet the Confessions of our Church seem clearly to teach that the designation of the first day of the week, as a time to be employed in holy use, is not to be referred to a divine obligation that the specified proportion of one day in seven is to be kept as a holy day, but that the observance of the Lord's day is to be referred to the necessity for such suitable time as the Church, in the exercise of her liberty, shall apportion, in order stately to administer the means of grace, and to worship God publicly in the sanctuary. The Augsburg Confession, Art. XXVIII., says: "What then should be held concerning Sunday and other similar Church ordinances and ceremonies? To this we reply: That the bishops or pastors may make such regulations, so that things may be carried on orderly in the Church. \* \* \* Those, then, who are of opinion that such institution of Sunday instead of the Sabbath, was established as a thing necessary, err very much. For the Holy Scripture has abolished the Sabbath, and it teaches that all ceremonies of the old law, since the revelation of the gospel, may be discontinued. And yet, as it was necessary to appoint a certain day, so that the people might know when they should assemble, the Christian Church ordained Sunday for that purpose, and possessed rather more inclination and willingness for this alteration, in order that the people might have an example of Christian liberty, that they might know that neither the observance of the Sabbath, nor of any other day, is indispensable."\* Luther, in his Larger Catechism, commenting on the Third Commandment, says: "It is necessary to observe that we keep the Sabbath day [Lord's day], \* \* \* mostly for the purpose of enabling us to embrace time and opportunity on these Sabbath days, since we cannot otherwise embrace them, to attend to divine service, so that we may assemble ourselves to hear and treat of the word of God, and to praise him, by singing and

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\* Book of Concord, Henkel's Eng. Edit., p. 137.

prayer. But this, I say, is not so confined to time as it was among the Jews, that it must be precisely this or that day, for one day is not better in itself than another, but it should be daily attended to; but since the common class of people cannot attend to it, we should reserve one day in the week, at least, for this purpose. Inasmuch, however, as Sunday has been set apart from old for this purpose, we should therefore let it remain so, that the Sabbath may be observed with uniformity, and that no one create disorder through unnecessary innovation." \* The foregoing language of the Confessions indicates that the moral obligation of the Third Commandment does not pertain to the designation of one-seventh of time for holy use as distinct from secular use, but to the holy use of whatsoever time human ordinances, in conformity to the law of good order, may designate for the administration of the word and sacraments, and for the worship of God. In other words, under the gospel, there is no day nor time, in itself, by divine command, more holy than another; but there is a divine obligation resting upon the Church to administer the means of grace and to worship God publicly in the sanctuary, cf. Mt. xxviii. 19, 20; Heb. x. 25; and consequently to set apart such times for these purposes, as the law of good order may designate, 1 Cor. xiv. 40. This doctrine of the Confession seems to be sanctioned by the divine word. The seventh day, which God blessed and sanctified at creation, Gen. ii. 2, 3, may be understood, consistently with the various durations of time which Gesenius assigns to the word יום, day, † as the last of those vast geological periods which science requires for the creation and existence of the pre-Adamite world. "They who contend," says Tayler Lewis, "that the divine Sabbath is simply the first twenty-four hours after creation, make it unmeaning as predicated of God and his works." Lange Com. Gen., p. 196. This interpretation of the Sabbath, instituted in Paradise, as the beginning of the rest of God from all creative work, and which rest is to end at "the regeneration" when the new heavens and the new earth

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\* Book of Concord, Henkel's Eng. Edit., p. 449.

† "Spoken of the natural day, from the rising to the setting sun, also of the civil day, or twenty-four hours, which includes the night." Also, "time," Gesen. Heb. Lex. Sub. יום. Such also is the varied signification of day in English. "1. The space of time between the rising and setting of the sun. 2. The whole time or period of one revolution of the earth on its axis, or twenty-four hours. 3. Age; time with reference to the existence of a person or thing." — *Webster's Dict.*



shall appear. Rev. xxi. 1, is in harmony with the New Testament idea, that under the gospel dispensation there is no divinely ordained distinction of days, but that every day is to be sanctified. Hence the reference in the Third Commandment to the seventh day of rest, which began at the end of the six creative days, may be understood analogically; for as Gerhard says in his "*Loci Theologici*:" "Neither is there in Genesis any trace of the sanctification of the seventh day before the giving of the Law."\* The observance of the Sabbath, Ex. xvi. 26, previous to the announcement of the Third Commandment at Sinai, Ex. xx. 8, and which Dr. Paley considers its first institution, Moral Philos, Bk. V., ch. 7, may be understood proleptically, as is the Saviour's announcement to Nicodemus of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, which was not formally announced to the Church until the great commission was given, after the resurrection, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. The New Testament indicates the abrogation not only of a specific but of a generic distinction of days. "One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord," Rom. xiv. 5, 6. The meaning of the apostle seems evidently to be, that if a man regardeth a day at all as the Sabbath, it should be because of the holy use of the day as distinct from secular use, and not because one day in itself is to be esteemed above another. "He struck not at a day but at a principle. If \* \* he only meant to establish a new set of days in the place of the old, there is no intelligent principle for which he is contending, and that earnest apostle is only a champion for one day instead of another, an assertor of the eternal sanctities of Sunday, instead of the eternal sanctities of Saturday," Rev. F. W. Robertson, Serm. vol. 2, p. 202. "The obvious inference from his (Paul's) arguing, is that he \* \* believed all times and days alike," Alford, Com., Rom. xiv. 6. "Let no man, therefore, judge you in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbaths; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ," Col. ii. 16, 17. "The holiday is yearly; the new moon, monthly; the Sabbaths weekly. \* \* Paul intimates here the removal of all distinctions of days; Christ clearly taught the liberty of the Sabbath. \* \* The Lord's day is mentioned,

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\* XIII. § 139. Note. \* \* nec ullum exstat vestigium sanctificationis diei septimi in Genesi ante promulgationem legis.



not enjoined. A stated day is useful and necessary to those who are engrossed in worldly concerns. They who keep a continual Sabbath, enjoy greater liberty. The Sabbath is a type even of eternal things, Heb. iv. 3, 4, yet its obligation does not therefore continue in the New Testament, otherwise the new moons should be retained," Bengel, Gnomon, Col. ii. 16. The doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in regard to the ground of obligation for the observance of the Lord's Day is thus stated by Rev. H. E. Jacobs, D. D. "She utterly repudiates the Sabbath as a day, call it by what name you please. She regards every day as the Sabbath of the believer, and no day as the Sabbath of the unbeliever. \* \* Whilst rejecting the Sabbath as a part of the ceremonial law, she clings with affection to the day on which her Lord rose, as a day to rejoice and be glad in, as a day on which the great congregation can assemble, and join heart and voice with the church triumphant in ascriptions of honor and glory to him that loved us and gave himself for us. \* \* She will allow no one to judge her with respect to the Sabbath day; but at the same time, she will allow no one to deprive her of the Lord's day," *Ev. Rev.*, vol. xx, p. 152.

*b. The Christian Year.*—From the consideration of weekly festivals, we turn to that of yearly festivals. As the moral element in the observance of the Lord's day consists in the holy use of time as distinct from its secular use, and the ceremonial element appears in the designation of times and modes of observance according to the law of good order; so we find a moral and a ceremonial element in the ground of obligation for the observance of yearly festivals. The moral element is the recognition of remarkable manifestations of divine providence and grace; the ceremonial element is the designation of such events in conformity to the law of good order. Under the Old Testament, the divine ordinances required the yearly commemoration of important events in the constitution and development of the Jewish Church. These stated festivals afforded opportunity to instruct the people in the essential truths relative to the events; they did much to confirm the faith of the Jews in their religion, and were of great advantage in promoting acquaintance and friendship among the several Jewish tribes. The most conspicuous of these Jewish festivals was typical of the atonement for sin by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God; another was typical of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the planting of the Christian

Church. The moral element in both these Jewish festivals is perpetuated under the gospel, by the special recognition of divine grace in the fulfillment of the type by the observance of Good-Friday and Whit-Sunday as holy days. The ceremonial element in the Jewish festivals is modified by the Christian Church, so as to designate only such festivals as the ethical and æsthetic principles of the law of good order determine, viz.: that yearly festivals of the Christian Church should not be excessive in number, and should be restricted to a recognition of the chief events in the life of Christ, and of those doctrines which are essential to salvation. Wicklif, the forerunner of the Reformation, is represented by Neander, in his *Church History*,\* as contending that in his day many thought that all saint-day festivals should be abolished, and the festivals of Christ alone remain; for thus Christ would be kept in more lively remembrance, and the devotion of the faithful would not be so improperly distributed between Christ and his members. As reasons for the observance of yearly festivals or holidays by the Christian Church, it may be said, that if those events of the Jewish Church which typified the advent of Christ were worthy of commemoration, much more worthy are those which have so wonderfully fulfilled the type. If there are any events worthy of a special commemoration, they are those which characterize the earthly life of our Saviour; and if there are truths worthy of special recognition, they are those which he uttered. The same reason which justifies the celebration of our national anniversary and Thanksgiving day, sanctions the usage of the Christian Church, in the exercise of her liberty with respect to the observance of days, to set apart certain days to commemorate exclusively the great events and fundamental truths of Christianity. "The pillars on which Christianity rests are matters of fact, such as the birth, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of the Saviour. Hence any rational method tending to extend and perpetuate the knowledge of these facts must exert a salutary influence on Christianity itself.† A systematic arrangement of the festivals and holidays of the Church into a calendar exhibits the Christian year; the design of which is thus set forth in a sermon by Dr. Ahlfeld, translated by Rev. L. W. Heydenreich, in *Ev. Rev.*, Vol. V, p. 280: "The Church

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\* Eng. Ed., Vol. v, p. 169.

† S. S. Schumucker, D. D., *Lutheran Manual*, p. 175.

has become almost totally unconscious of the significance of her ecclesiastical year. \* \* Some may perhaps even ask the question, what has the year to do with the Church, or what has the Church to do with the year? The sun rules the common year. One rotation of the earth around it constitutes the annual circle, which successively develops the lovely spring, the ardent summer, the rich autumn, and the severe and silent winter. Each of these parts has its peculiar character. In the firmament of the Church, there also stands a sun whose name is Jesus Christ; it shines by day and by night, forever and ever. And as the earth moves around the visible sun, so the Church moves around the sun of divine grace, so she travels through the sacred history of the Saviour. Her spring is the lovely season of Christmas and Epiphany, when Christ is born a man, when in his glory He declares himself to be the Son of God with power. Her summer is the season of Lent, and the Passion-time of Jesus Christ, in which the anticipation of His death rests upon her like heavy, sultry days, until at last the storm of death, so long approaching, breaks forth, and the flash of lightning descends out of the black sin-cloud and slays the righteous. Her harvest-time and autumn are the days when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the disciples, and when in the lovely, long Trinity Sundays, one kind of fruit after another of the gifts of the Triune God is borne into the granary of the heart. The greatest diversity of events in the life of the Lord are crowded into this rich period. And wherever He stands and whatever He does or asks, presents a field from which the believer may reap and gather. At last comes the severe and silent winter. From the twentieth Sunday after Trinity begin the gospels which treat of the final things. \* \* On the last Sunday, the twenty-seventh after Trinity, all the different gospels which are used treat of the entrance into the kingdom of glory. Thus on the first day of the ecclesiastical year, the Lord is announced in whom we may have life abundantly; on the last day, believers have reached the goal of all their labors. The ecclesiastical year is a correct one; it is better regulated than the common year. It begins with its spring-messengers and spring, and ends not only with winter, with death and judgment, but also with victory over death and judgment. The common year begins with winter, and at its close it is again winter. There is no natural progress in it. The Christian's life should be nothing but a journey around this heavenly orb,

in order that he may experience its warming and enlightening influences." These extracts show that the design of the Christian year is to exhibit, within the cycle of the siderial year, and in "good order," the truths pertaining to the persons and the work of the Triune God; and, likewise, the duties and experience which pertain immediately to the Church. This idea is in harmony with the divine word, that "all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, and instruction in righteousness," and this idea is best realized through the systematic arrangement of the Christian year. The two services on the Lord's day and one in the midst of the week afford opportunity, not only for the commemoration of events and truths designated by the Christian year, but for the consideration and improvement of any providential events or necessities in the experience of the local congregations. With respect to the arrangement of the Christian year, the following ideas are submitted, and which are derived from an article by Prof. Plitt, of Bonn, on "The relation of the Sermon to the Church year," translated by Rev. J. D. Severinghaus, in the *Ev. Rev.*, vol. xviii., p. 169. There are two chief divisions of equal length, including twenty-six weeks each. The first division relates chiefly to the person of Christ, beginning with the first Sunday in Advent, or the fourth Sunday before Christmas, ending with the Sunday which commemorates the Trinity of the Godhead. The second division relates especially to the Church, and extends from the first Sunday after Trinity Sunday to the first Sunday in Advent. The first division of the Church year, or the half year of the Lord, is "the season of commencing, of carrying through, and of finishing the great work," or, Christmas season, a Lent season, and a season of glorification. The birth of Christ belongs to the first; his sufferings and death to the second; his resurrection and ascension to the third. With regard to the second division, *i. e.*, the half year of the Church, "we have also a time of beginning, which is the season of the apostles and their doctrines; a time of carrying through, which is the time of the martyrs and of sufferings; a time of finishing, which is the season of the angels and of the end, or of the last things." With respect to this outline of the Christian year and its observance, it may be said that the Evangelical Lutheran Church, consistently with the doctrinal position of the Fifteenth Article of the Augsburg Confession, holds a conservative position, between that of the Roman Church with its excessive multiplication



of festal and saints' days, and that of most Reformed Churches which radically proscribes the observance of any special days to commemorate the great facts and truths of Christianity. It is to be said, however, that in other portions of the Reformed Churches, apart from the Protestant Episcopal Church, there are indications of a growing appreciation of a proper observance of the Christian year.

*c. "Protracted Meetings."*—There is a usage prevalent in some portions of the Church, which relates to the observance of special days or times for the administration of the word, in order to effect the immediate conversion of the impenitent, and to arouse professing Christians who have fallen into a state of spiritual indifference. Such special occasions are sometimes called "protracted meetings." One theory upon which these extra meetings are held, implies that the stated administration of the word on the Lord's day and once in the midst of the week, as is customary in most churches, is not an adequate arrangement; but that if the attention of men is held continuously and closely for a season to the subject of religion, they are more apt to be moved to a holy life, than if there are constant intervals of several days between the preaching of the word. In reply to such an inference, it is to be said that, as "the Holy Spirit works faith, when and where it pleases God, in those who hear the gospel," Augs. Con., Art. V., that is, "with respect to the presence, the operations, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, no one ought to, or can always, judge *ex sensu*, that is, as to manner and time in which these things are perceived in the heart, but they frequently occur, and are concealed under our great imperfections," Form Concord. Dec. (II), therefore we cannot determine the inadequacy of the stated administration of the word, if we do not perceive immediately the fruit of the Spirit's power in the word. To use an illustration of Chemnitz: "Just as the motion of the air is now violent, now gentle, now not perceived at all, so the regenerated must know that the presence and operating power of the Spirit is not measured by the perception of spiritual movements."\* It seems to be a just inference, however, that the attempt to determine a time and place for the manifestation of divine grace through a special public administration of the word, tends to the disparagement of the efficiency of

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\*Quoted in Besser's "Christ the Light of the World," Huxtable's trs, p. 136.



its stated public administration. Extra meetings for the public administration of the means of grace may be advocated consistently with objections to the revival system, when they are not based upon the same ground of necessity or usefulness as that upon which the revival system rests. Such extra meetings are held by the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in the observance of the Christian year; in the custom of catechisation; in holding services preparatory to the observance of the Lord's Supper; and in personal interviews with those who have been awakened through the stated public administration of the means of grace. If there is necessity for special public administration of the word to adults on the ground that its stated public administration is inadequate, the required opportunity is presented in catechisation; for catechisation, whilst it is principally designed to be an official administration of the word to the children of the Church, who receive regenerating grace in Baptism, in order to prepare them for communicant membership by their voluntary confirmation of baptismal vows, yet it likewise affords an opportunity to administer the word to adults not baptized, and for such as were baptized in infancy, but who, from neglect to nurture the spiritual life through childhood, have fallen from grace. "Tested by its fruits, the Lutheran doctrine of baptismal grace, when faithfully preached and consistently developed, will bear favorable comparison with the modern system of periodical efforts, or with any other system of doctrine and usage ever employed for the promotion of experimental religion and the development of true piety," F. W. Conrad, D. D., *Lect. on Baptism*, p. 321. The objection to the revival system, therefore, does not arise on account of extra meetings in themselves considered, but because they involve the inference that a faithful use of the stated times and opportunities for administering the means of grace are not adequate to a proper development of the Church, and because it is assumed that through these extra meetings the development of the Church is best realized. Another theory upon which so-called protracted meetings are maintained is the alleged attractive power in the extra meetings which is available for bringing large numbers under the influence of the truth, and which does not pertain to the stated services of the sanctuary. Upon this theory we cannot, however, refer the attraction simply to the means of grace, for they are, in themselves considered, as efficacious at one time as another; hence, any

superior popularity of the extra meetings of the revival system must be referred to influences which are incidental to, or associated with, the administration of the word; such as the excitement awakened, or expected, from the mere assembling of large numbers of people on special occasions; the curiosity of some to witness the manifestations of alleged spiritual awakening in individuals; or sensationalism in singing or in preaching the word. The objection to the revival system as a human agency which designates a periodical season for the immediate manifestation of divine grace, does not involve a denial of the fact that there have been genuine revivals of religion in the Church, wrought by the Holy Spirit through the truth; but when we attempt to specify the human agency which developed them, or to indicate the way of the Spirit in producing them, it must often be said, as our Saviour has said of the kingdom of God, that it "cometh not with observation," Lk. xvii. 20. If extra meetings are necessary for immediate manifestations of divine grace on the ground that the stated services of the Church are inadequate to its development, we might consistently apply the same principle to the curriculum of education in theological seminaries. Experience in such institutions, however, proves that a systematic course of study of divine truth statedly and faithfully administered, does not require a periodical continuity of intense application for several weeks, in order to a healthful intellectual development of the students, but that this end is best attained when there is a regular and equitable distribution of recitations throughout the academic year. If the stated public administration of the word to adults, twice on the Lord's day and once in the midst of the week, and the administration of baptism as a means of regeneration for infants, with their subsequent catechetical instruction as a preparation for communicant membership, together with the administration of the Lord's Supper to adults as a means of sanctification, have been designated by almost uniform and constant observance, in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and have proven through experience, when faithfully observed, to be adequate for the development of the Church in harmony with the will of God, it would seem that the Church should apply her force and fidelity to these stated and established opportunities, rather than ignore their sufficiency by a reliance upon the periodical revival.

## II. MODES OF SERVICE IN THE SANCTUARY.

It is the function of the human agency in the development of the Church not only to designate the times of ecclesiastical service, but likewise to regulate the mode of its administration. This aspect of human ordinances in the Church has much significance. The character of the Church is illustrated and its spirit is revealed by the manner of its service in the sanctuary. Divine service in the sanctuary consists of two essentially distinct parts: (1) The worship of God; (2) The administration of the means of grace.

*a. Principles of the Cultus.*—With respect to public worship, Olshausen\* observes: "The element of adoration, with spurious objectiveness, has acquired in the Roman Church, an undue predominance, while in the Reformed Church with spurious subjectiveness, the preacher and his discourse have too much supplanted the element of adoration. The middle course is the right one, and it requires the two to be so distributed that the minister may stand forth not only in his subjectiveness as a teacher, but also as the organ through which the adoration of the Church receives expression." Dr. Höfling, in an article on "The Principles of the Cultus of the Evangelical Church," † presents five principles as constituting liturgical action, which may be characterized by the terms, truth, freedom, generality, decorum and solemnity. With respect to truth he says: "The only objectively true and Evangelical faith of the Bible in redemption is just as truly expressed as it is appealed to by the cultus." Of freedom he says: "There is no ceremonial law of the New Testament; the acts of the cultus do not possess a character of external works commanded of God, \* \* the consciences of believers are not bound by this or that form of external worship, and the order of worship becomes an intolerable commandment of men, as soon as it is claimed to be a necessary element of the divine order of salvation." Of generality he says: "The Christian cultus is no merely individual, subjective or private worship, but public, common, and churchly. Its subject is not the individual believer *per se*, but the congregation of believers. Hence we infer that the merely individual and subjective understanding of the Scriptures cannot be enforced, *nolens volens*, as objective truth, but

\* Com. Acts ii. 42-47, Vol. IV., p. 393, trans. by Lindsay.

† Translated by Rev. H. S. Lasar, Ev. Rev. Vol. X., p. 232, sq.

wholly the common interpretation of the Church; and that the private faith of the individual subject cannot lay claim to be exhibited in the cultus, but the faith of the congregation." In reference to the relation of the worship of a local congregation to that of the total, after quoting the Seventh Article of the Augsburg Confession, that "it is not necessary to the true unity of the Christian Church that uniform traditions, rites and ceremonies of human appointment, should be everywhere observed," and that "it is sufficient that the gospel be rightly preached and the sacraments rightly administered," Dr. Höfling adds, that "the requisition that the worship of God should bear a churchly common character, that all the local congregations should agree, refers, especially \* \* to those acts in which, not so much the local as the total congregation is seen to act by the organ of her called servants in the name of God." It is not designed, however, by this principle, to neglect or ignore in any respect the spiritual wants and experience of the individual and of local congregations in public worship, but simply that the faith and worship of the Church in general should be preëminently exhibited, as we shall observe more particularly hereafter. In reference to the fourth principle, decorum, he says: "A form of public and common action, like that of the cultus, cannot and dare not refuse to submit to the rule of the general moral law of order and decency; will not sacrifice the proper organization and orderly course of such action to accident or the option of a few individuals. \* \* The several parts must be united to an organic whole, and the different acts follow in such a succession as characterizes the nature and end of common worship. \* \* The chief requisitions of this principle are the exactness in the time and place, as well as the order and course of worship, the proper distribution of the different functions, and especially the provision made of particular organs to direct cultus-action." In reference to the fifth principle, solemnity, he says: "Cultus action cannot dispense with beauty and art, its end being to afford an expression to be perceived by the senses of something spiritual, and to keep everything distant that is low and common, all that is sensuous, impure and unworthy, or merely sensuous and not a reflex of the spiritual. But as little as the contents of the cultus is the spiritual and ideal generally, just so little can liturgical action be identical with artistic action generally, or beauty be its highest law. There is an immense, a specific difference between profane and



sacred art. Profane art never advances higher than a religious contemplation of the world, but true churchly art is the representation of the divine, apprehended in the natural contemplation of God for the end of common devotion. The spiritual, as the contents of the cultus and calculated for the senses, \* \* is that which is holy *per se*. It being brought to exhibit itself directly in a proper manner, its result is not the beautiful, but the solemn. All liturgical action will correspond with this principle, if in it the arts are disrobed of all their own natural ideal contents, renouncing all efforts by their dexterity and skill to please; if they serve but the sacred object they are to represent, both respecting form and contents, and appear as entirely devoted to and exclusively determined by it, in their production." The author then adds respecting these principles: "The less isolated they coöperate and the greater their harmonious union and mutual interpenetration, the more living, the more pleasing in every direction and the more perfectly satisfactory will the cultus appear. No one element of religion and piety will make itself felt at the expense and exclusion of the others. \* \* On the mutual mediation of these, \* \* on their resolution into a higher unity, and not upon their displacing and excluding each other, depends chiefly the living character of the cultus."

*b. General Synod's Order of Public Worship.* Accepting these principles and guided by them, our General Synod formulates and presents in the Book of Worship, an order of public service in the sanctuary, in the observance of which the objective truth of the divine word, which is essential in true worship, is manifested every Lord's day in the morning service; thus conforming to the first principle of liturgical action. The non-observance of this ritual as a privilege of the local congregation, may serve to illustrate the second of the foregoing principles, viz. freedom; for thus it appears that "the consciences of believers are not bound by this or that form of external worship," nor does the order of worship become "an intolerable command of men," as though an unalterable liturgical service was "a necessary element of the divine order of salvation." The order of public worship on the Lord's day at the morning service also recognizes the third principle, termed generality, by which the local congregation exhibits the faith and worship of the Church in general. Whilst each of the five liturgical principles referred to has its special significance and value, the third principle,



named generality, especially furnishes an argument of much force for the use of a liturgical form of worship. That principle requires that the local congregation shall adequately express the faith and worship of the general or total Church. A prescribed formula by which the total church is assured that her own faith and worship, and not the subjective views or feelings of the individual minister or local congregation are expressed, is therefore a necessity. An examination of the Order of Service, in the Book of Worship, will show that the first acts of service by the local congregation are an exhibition and confession of the faith and devotion of the Church in general. The Confession of Sin, the Introits, the Gloria Patri, concluding with the Kyrie Eleison, the Gloria in Excelsis, and the Confession of Faith in the Apostles' Creed, embody not simply the worship and faith of the individual Christian or congregation; but especially is the Church catholic represented in all the essential aspects of her faith and worship. There is perhaps ground for a minor criticism, that there is incompleteness in our order of service by the omission of rubrics to direct the congregation in the use of the liturgy; also by the omission of the declaration of absolution, which seems appropriate after the Confession of Sin and the Kyrie. For as the Church in general practically and appropriately illustrates her faith in the confession of sin, there would be conformity to good order and truth by practically and appropriately illustrating her faith in the forgiveness of sin, which indeed she professes in the Apostles' Creed, but which is not announced to the believing penitent. The Twenty-fifth Article of the Augsburg Confession says: "Our preachers diligently teach that confession should be retained for the sake of absolution, which is the principal and most valuable thing in it, to bring consolation to alarmed consciences, as well as for several other reasons." It is also doubtful whether it was an improvement to substitute the indefinite expression in the Apostles' Creed, "He descended into the place of departed spirits," for the phrase, "He descended into Hell." Certainly it is the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as stated by Luther, according to the Formula of Concord (IX.), "that the whole person, God and man, after his burial, descended into hell, and destroyed its power." Thus it is also stated in Luther's Smaller Catechism, in the Apostles' Creed, that Christ "descended into hell." The reading of the Pericopes designated in the ecclesiastical calendar, also harmonizes

with proper liturgical action, if there is an observance of the Christian year. The importance of the principle that the local church should represent the objective faith and worship of the total Church, is not, however, by any means designed to ignore the subjective wants or necessities of the individual or of the local congregation; indeed, as integral constituents of the entire Church, they must individually experience the common faith and devotion which they represent. But beyond the individual experience, in the common worship, the service of the sanctuary provides for the spiritual wants of the individual and of the local congregation, by the opportunity for extemporaneous prayer and for hymns adapted to special wants or occasions. The sermon, likewise, which is the prominent part of divine service, is usually delivered stately three times during the week, and thereby opportunity is given not only for the consideration of topics suggested by the Christian year, but likewise by individual or congregational experience. This recognition of that which is public, common and churchly, and likewise of that which is individual, subjective and local, pertains to the cultus of the General Synod; which has "preserved the continuity of the past life of the Church with the present, in the adoption of forms, sacred through long association, and in making provision at the same time for the peculiar needs of the hour in unwritten prayers."\*

*c. Art in Worship.* It was observed in the fifth liturgical principle, that "cultus action cannot dispense with beauty and art, its end being to afford an expression to be perceived by the senses of something spiritual; but as liturgical action is not identical with artistic action, "the arts must serve the sacred objects they represent, and appear as entirely devoted to it." Guided by this principle, the æsthetic judgment constructs and adorns the sanctuary, so that the external associations of divine service may awaken and cherish a truly devotional spirit; it avoids, on the one hand, a gaudy meretricious taste, which ministers to pride and vanity; and on the other, that bald simplicity which does not apprehend the nature nor power of sacred art. The true ethical and æsthetic judgment discards all melodies in divine service, which simply please the sensuous taste, or draw attention to the artistic skill of the performer, yet fail to awaken true devotion in the soul, and which, however appropriate

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\* L. E. Albert, D. D., Lutheran Diet, 1877, p. 272.

elsewhere, are incongruous with the solemn associations of the house of God. It forbids all sensationalism, and whilst it requires eloquence and art in the ministry of the word, they must be concealed in the pre-eminent appearance and power of the truth. It makes a distinction to the eye, between the worship of God and the administration of his word, when the minister conducts the liturgical service in the chancel and delivers the sermon from the pulpit; and it is in conformity with a right liturgical form of public service in the sanctuary that the officiating minister should wear a distinctive robe in the performance of his official work. A plain vestment of black, unlike the gaudy robes of the Roman priest, serves to identify the character of the minister and his office, and to impress upon the people the solemnity of the divine service in which they engage. Rev. John Hall, D. D., an eminent Presbyterian clergyman of New York city, says: "It does not follow, because a preacher is not a priest, that he is nothing but a paid speaker, or leader, or lecturer. He is an ambassador of Christ, a minister of the gospel, a commissioned officer in the Lord's sacramental host, called of God before he was called by the people of his particular charge; and whatever in dress or address will keep this in his own mind and in the mind of his people and the community, is not quite despicable. In the recoil from dead officialism in some parts of the country, it has been accepted as the proper thing for a clergyman to avoid, in some degree, any distinctive professional characteristics. This, however, may, like all reactions, be carried to the point where some evil begins; and it is just where this policy has ruled, and where sacred things are habitually divested of all sacred concomitants, that we should look for another and opposite reaction in favor of a florid or stately service."\* Jacobson, in Herzog's *Real Encyclopædia*, vol. 7, p. 734, under Art. *Kleider und Insignien*, says that "ministers in the first centuries in the ordinary intercourse of life did not distinguish themselves from the people by their clothing, but beyond doubt they did so in the performance of their official acts."† And we may observe in the portraits of many eminent ministers of various Protestant churches, since the days of the Reformation, that they are represented with a distinctive clerical apparel.

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\* *Princeton Review*, Mar. 1878, p. 354.

† Im gemein verkehr unterschieden sich aber in den ersten Jahrhunderten die Beamten, dann der Klerus von dem Volke in der Kleidung nicht, wogegen dies ohne Zweifel bei Amtsverrichtungen geschah.

## III. CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT.

Thus far the application of the principles regulating human ordinances has been made to *times* and *modes* of divine service. Another distinct function of the human agency which claims attention is the constitution and administration of government in the Church.

*a. Relation between Church and State.* A preliminary reference to the relation between Church and State will not require an extended discussion; inasmuch as it is a fundamental law of this nation, with which the public sentiment accords, that the State cannot officially coöperate with the Church in its government or development.

The first Amendment to the Constitution of the United States declares that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The Church and State are alike divinely ordained institutions for the welfare of humanity, and each has its distinct sphere and object, yet they are by no means absolutely independent of each other. Whilst it is exclusively the function of the State to protect life and property, and of the Church to administer the means of divine grace for the salvation of men, yet there is reciprocal protection. The State is the guardian of the Church, so that in its free development, "no one dares to molest it or make it afraid," a blessing which we need not go far back in history to learn to appreciate. We have but to recall the "Thirty Years' War," which desolated Germany, and the trials of England under Queen Mary and King James II. The principle that the Church shall not be persecuted for its faith was completely settled, and we trust forever, by the victory of the Protestants at Lutzen in 1632, associated with the heroic martyrdom of Gustavus Adolphus, and by the English revolution of 1688. On the other hand, the Church is the true guardian of the State. The spirit of Christianity as well as its precepts educate the citizen to loyalty, industry, and humanity. These are the best standing army of a nation; and it needs no prophet's eye to discern that the hope of perpetuating our noble civil government must rest upon the intelligence and piety of the people. "The nation that forgets God shall perish." This obligation of the Church to infuse its faith into the State by no means implies that there should be any organic union between them, nor that the faith of the Church should be formally engrafted upon the constitutional law of the State. Our country affords an illustrious example to the nations of Europe which yet



perpetuate an organic union of Church and State, that the Church can be faithful to her calling in her own sphere, distinct from organic union with civil government, and thereby aid the State and receive its protection in return. And whilst she has wisely refrained from attempting to exhibit her confession of faith in the national constitution, she has, to some extent, developed in its subjects the righteousness which "exalteth a nation."

*b. Specific Forms of Church Government: Papal; Episcopal; Presbyterian; Congregational; Evangelical Lutheran.* Of more immediate practical interest and importance to us than the relation between Church, and State, is the constitution and administration of government in the Church; inasmuch as the subjective views of men, herein, again widely differ in the application of the principles regulating human ordinances in the Church. Such importance pertains to modes of constituting government in the Church, that they serve in a great measure to mark and identify several of the great denominations of Christendom. Four different forms of government exist in the Christian Church in this land, viz.: the Papal, the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, and the Congregational, representing respectively monarchical, aristocratic, representative and democratic ideas of government. The papal form of government is indeed administered by a body of clergy of different ranks and orders, but of this hierarchy the pope or bishop of Rome is regarded as the supreme head of the visible Church, who in his official capacity is infallible in his judgment and absolute in his authority. The Episcopal form of government in the Protestant Church involves the principal that a succession from the Apostles in the order of bishops, as an order distinct from and superior to those who are called presbyters or teaching elders in the Church, is a requisite without which a valid Christian ministry cannot be preserved. The Methodist Episcopal Church discards the principle of an apostolic succession as necessary to a valid ministry, but "regards episcopacy as essential to the itineracy."\* A third form of government in the Church, called the Presbyterian, maintains "that as to the bishops and presbyters, the Holy Scriptures make no difference between them," but that "all ministers of the gospel, although described by different names and titles, which designate their various functions, are of

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\* J. F. Crane, D. D., *Methodism and its Methods*, p. 185.



equal rank." This form of government holds that it is "agreeable to the Scriptures that the Church be governed by congregational, presbyterial, and synodical assemblies."\* The Presbyterian organization is thus set forth in the "Westminster Confession of Faith," 1647, chap. 31:†

SEC. 1. "For the better government and further edification of the Church, there ought to be such assemblies as are currently called synods or councils." The American edition here adds: "And it belongeth to the overseers and other rulers of the particular churches, by virtue of their office and the power which Christ hath given them for edification and not for destruction, to appoint such assemblies, and to convene together in them, as often as they shall judge it expedient for the good of the Church. Acts xv. 22, 23, 25.

SEC. 2. "It belongeth to synods and councils, ministerially, to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience, to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God and government of his Church; to receive complaints in cases of maladministration, and authoritatively to determine the same; which decrees and determinations, if consonant with the word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, not only for their agreement with the word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in his word."

A fourth form of government is the Congregational. Those who adopt it "agree in the belief that the right of government resides in local churches or congregations of believers, who are responsible directly to the Lord Jesus Christ, the one Head of the Church universal, and of all particular churches."‡ Let us briefly estimate the value of each of these forms of government as human ordinances, from the standpoint of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. With respect to the primacy of Peter, it is taught and declared in the "Dogmatic Decrees of the Vatican Council, 1870," chap. 1, "that according to the testimony of the gospel the primacy of jurisdiction over the universal Church of God was immediately and divinely

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\* J. M. Krebs, D. D., *Art. Presbyterian Church*, in *Rupp's Hist. of Relig. Denom. in U. S.*, p. 567.

† *Schaff's Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III., p. 669.

‡ *Declaration of the National Congregational Council at Oberlin, O., 1871*, in *Schaff's Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III., p. 737.

promised and given to blessed Peter the apostle, by Christ, the Lord.”\* With respect to the primacy of the Pope, his alleged successors, the following canon occurs in ch. 2: “If then any should deny that it is by the institution of Christ, the Lord, or by divine right, that blessed Peter should have a perpetual line of successors in the primacy over the universal Church, or that the Roman pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter in this primacy, let him be anathema.” With respect to the power of the Roman pontiff, it is taught and declared in ch. 3, “that by the appointment of our Lord, the Roman Church possesses a superiority of ordinary power over all other churches, and that this power of jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff, which is truly episcopal, is immediate, to which all, of whatever rank and dignity, both pastors and faithful, both individually and collectively, are bound by their duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience to submit, not only in matters which belong to faith and morals, but also in those that appertain to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world, so that the Church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme pastor, through the preservation of unity, both of communion and of profession of the same faith with the Roman pontiff. This is the teaching of Catholic truth, from which no one can deviate without loss of faith and salvation.” The Roman Church claims this supreme authority for the Roman pontiff, the alleged successor of Peter, as a divine right, on the ground that the following passage of Scripture, among others, confers it, Matt. xvi. 18, 19. Christ said to Peter: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.” The Protestant churches regard it essential to the right interpretation of this passage of Scripture, that the words of Christ to Peter be referred not to the person of Peter, but to the answer which Peter gave to the question which Christ asked all the disciples, “Whom say ye that I am?” After the inadequate answers of some, Peter correctly replies, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” That confession of Peter is the rock upon which Christ has built his Church. In Matt. xviii. 18, Christ says

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\* Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, Vol. II., p. 167, sq.

to all the disciples, what he had said to Peter: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," etc. The power of the keys, which it is alleged Christ gave to none but Peter, can only mean the office through which the promise of the Gospel is imparted to every one that desires it; yet this power, Christ expressly said, pertained to the whole Church; for after unavailing efforts to reconcile an offending brother, Christ directs that the difficulty shall be referred to the Church, and if the offender neglects to hear the Church, "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." The office of the keys was again bestowed not upon Peter but upon the disciples on the resurrection day; "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained," John xx. 23. Paul places himself on an equality with Peter with respect to his office: "For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles," Gal. ii. 8; and he ascribes to divine grace the ability to accomplish a greater work than any of the apostles; indeed, he declares that he withstood Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed for dissembling with the Jews. But if Peter had any primacy of office we may reasonably suppose that Paul would have here recognized it. On the night of his betrayal, Christ taught the apostles, disputing among themselves who of them ought to be regarded as the vicar of Christ after his death, that he wanted no primacy among them. "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, but so shall it not be among you." Yet again we read that "the Council of Nice, (325) resolved that the bishop or pastor of Alexandria should provide for the Churches in the East, and the bishop or pastor of Rome for those in the West,"\* showing the supremacy of the Church over the bishops, and denying the primacy of the bishop of Rome over all others. For these among other reasons the Protestant Church rejects the dogma that a proper constitution of the government of the Church must recognize the Pope by divine right as the supreme head and ruler of the Church. This article of the Roman Church, says Luther, "we hold and know to be false, impious, tyrannical and pernicious in the extreme to the Christian Church."† Respecting the infallible teaching of the

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\* Appendix to Smalcald Articles, VI.

† Book of Concord, Eng. Ed., p. 392.

Roman pontiff, it is said in ch. 4 of the "Dogmatic Decrees of the Vatican Council, 1870,"\* "We teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed that the Roman pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians by virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church should be endowed for defining doctrine, regarding faith or morals; and that therefore such definitions of the Roman pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church." An illustration of papal "infallibility" occurs in the decree of Pope Paul V. (1616), confirmed by his successor, Urban VIII., that Galileo's propositions (1) "that the earth moves around the sun," and (2) "that the earth has a diurnal motion of rotation," are "heretical," *i. e.*, contrary to the teaching of Scripture, and "erroneous as to faith."† Of this dogma of papal infallibility, a learned pontiff, of irreproachable morals, viz., Adrian VI., says, in a book reprinted at Rome in 1522, during his pontificate, that "it is certain that the Pope may err in matters of faith in defending heresy by his opinions or decretals." D'Aubigne, giving the original of these words and the reference, says: "If the Ultramontanists reply that Adrian was mistaken on this point, by this very circumstance they affirm, what they deny, namely, the fallibility of the popes."‡

With respect to the Episcopal form of government, in the Protestant Episcopal Church, it is to be said that "some have recognized in Episcopacy an institution of divine origin, which is absolute and indispensable; others have represented it as destitute of all apostolic sanction and authority."§ According to the former view, no Christian community can have a right to claim to be considered in the true sense a branch of the Church catholic or universal, if it

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\* Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, Vol. II., p. 271.

† Miss Clark's life of Galileo, Ency. Brit., 9th Edit.

‡ Hist. Ref., vol. 3, p. 152, Am. Tract Soc. Ed.

§ "Certum est quod Pontifex potuit errare in iis quae tangunt fidem, hæresim per suam determinationem aut decretalem asserendo.—Comm, in lib. 4, Sententiarum Quest. de Sacr. Confirm., Romae, 1522, fol.

‡ Dr. Lightfoot, quoted in Art. Episcopacy, in Ency. Brit., 9th Edit.



have not episcopal organization. The latter view considers Episcopacy desirable to the good government of the Church, and to the maintainance of Evangelical truth and apostolic order, but not essential to its existence. It is evident, indeed it is conceded by advocates of the divine right of Episcopacy, that the offices of bishop and of presbyter in the New Testament are identical.\* Thus the presbyters or elders of the Ephesian Church summoned by St. Paul to meet him at Miletus, Acts. xx. 17, (*μετεκαλέσατο τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους*), are, in v. 28, designated by him bishops or "overseers" of the flock (*ἐν ᾧ ἡμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐθετο ἐπισκοπούς*.) Paul directs Titus to ordain elders, Tit. i. 5, (*καταστήσης πρεσβυτέρους*), and in the second verse following, in describing their qualifications, he calls them bishops, v. 7, (*δεῖ γάρ τοι ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεγκλήτον εἶναι*). The same thing occurs in his epistle to Timothy, 1 Tim. iii. 1, when he describes the qualification of a bishop for ruling well, (*εἰ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται*), and then in chap. v., v. 17, calls those who rule well "elders," (*οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι*.) "Any conclusion, therefore, drawn from the use of the term 'bishop' in the New Testament, as to the existence of the episcopal office, as an office of superior rank or authority to the office of presbyter or elder, would be fallacious."† The office of the apostles was indeed of superior rank and power to that of elders or bishops; but as the apostles were especially called, inspired and endowed with miraculous gifts, so we may believe, particularly in the absence of any positive scriptural or ecclesiastical testimony to the contrary, that their office in the Church likewise terminated with them, and was not perpetuated by the Episcopacy. Melancthon, in the Appendix to the Smalcald Articles (Bk. Con., p. 403, Eng. Ed.), says: "The gospel commands those who should regulate the Church, to preach the gospel, to remit sins, and to administer the sacraments; and it moreover gives them the authority to excommunicate those who live in the open commission of sin, and to absolve those who desire to amend their lives. Now every one, even our adversaries, must confess that all who preside over the Church have this command alike, whether they be called pastors or presbyters or bishops." The Formula of Government of the General Synod, (Ch. III. Sec. 1,) states that "the persons filling the clerical office in the

\* Cf. Canon Venables, quoted in Art. Episcopacy, in Ency. Brit., 9th Edit.

† Canon Venables, Art. Episcopacy, Ency. Brit., 9th Edit.



New Testament, are designated in Scripture by different names, as bishop, presbyter or elder, etc. All these are by divine right of equal rank." Hence we conclude that if an Episcopal organization existed in the early Church, it is to be regarded entirely as a human ordinance. Neander, in his Church History, thus explains the origin of the Episcopal office, as distinct from that of elder, in the early Christian Church: "Soon after the apostolic age, the standing office of president of the presbytery must have been formed; which president, as having preëminently the oversight over all, was designated by the special name of ἑπίσκοπος, and thus distinguished from the other presbyters. Thus the name came at length to be applied exclusively to this presbyter, while the name presbyter continued at first to be common to all; for the bishops, as presiding presbyters, had no official character other than that of the presbyters generally. They were only *primi inter pares*."\* Considered merely as a human ordinance, the Episcopal form of government has been advocated as promoting tranquillity and good order, and as not contradictory at least to the example of the Apostolic Church. It is thus considered "the means of the confederation of the church. The bishop represents the church, and is the centre of unity to the body, a safeguard against disunion and a security for the harmonious coöperation of its various constituents."† No doubt there is advantage to the local congregation and the rector or pastor, in the personal or individual oversight and visitation of a bishop; and in the Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and in Iceland, where the Evangelical Lutheran Church prevails, the Episcopal form of government is adopted, not as of divine obligation, but as a human ordinance of value to the Church. The Presbyterian and Congregational forms of government have been already described in the words of their own confessions of faith.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in this country, discarding Episcopacy, exhibits both Congregational and Presbyterian principles of government. It harmonizes with the doctrines of our Church, and the genius of our people, that the authority and government of the Church, in some respects, should be vested entirely in the members of the local congregation, and not delegated nor subjected to a

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\* Vol. I., p. 190, Eng. Ed.

† Canon Venables, Ency., Brit., 9th Ed., Art. Episcopacy.

foreign jurisdiction. Neander, commenting on the constitution of government in the early Christian Church, observes that "the monarchical form of government was not suited to the Christian community of spirit."\* Thus our church recognizes the Congregational polity to this extent, that the local congregation is free to manage its own affairs in the control of its property, in the choice of its pastor, and in the ordinary government and discipline of its members. Yet the Presbyterian principle of organization appears in the synodical relation of the local congregations. In this relation the congregation adopts the constitution of Synod, and whilst it thus participates through its representative in the legislation of the general for the local church, it is likewise subject to the authority of Synod; *e. g.* should the local congregation sever its connection with Synod by its own act, it may deprive itself of a pastor who will teach its confession of faith, inasmuch as "pastors are amenable to Synod, which has the entire jurisdiction over them."† The advantage of an oversight of the churches, which is attributed to the Episcopacy, is to some degree realized in the Evangelical Lutheran Church through the Synod and Synodical Conference. For these bodies visit the local congregations from time to time, not, however, as frequently as bishops or presiding elders; on the other hand, the congregations through the lay delegates and pastors come into frequent association with the Church at large through the Synod and Conference, when the duties and responsibilities of the local congregations are in some measure supervised. It might be profitable to discuss the question whether in our Synodical Conference districts a systematic visitation of local congregations, by a suitable person in an official capacity, is feasible and desirable, and whether such a practice would be consistent with the Congregational and Presbyterian principles of government already recognized in our church. Our General Synod is the representative, and likewise the legislative body for the entire church. It possesses, however, advisory rather than judicial power. It is of great value in forming a bond of union in the church, and in giving to it organic stability. It is also an important agency in the general missionary, benevolent, and educational operations of the Church. From this cursory view of the several exist-

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\* Ch. Hist., vol. i., p. 183, Eng. Ed.

† Form. Gov., Ch. III, Sec. 3, Gen. Synod.

ing forms of government, it will be observed that the Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes as principles, sanctioned by the New Testament, the parity of the ministry; the rights and liberty of the local congregation; the necessity, however, for representative government with authority to reach and render efficient the entire membership of the Church. These principles correspond with those which regulate our civil government, and embody the truth that human governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed; whilst their efficiency and success, both in the Church and State, seem to require, more than any other, the highest type of intelligence and piety in the people.

#### IV. CONSERVATION OF THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH.

There remains to be considered the application of the principles regulating human ordinances in the Church, with respect to the conservation of the faith.

*a. Creeds; their necessity and limitation.* Formulas of Faith, called Creeds or Confessions of Faith, have been, and ever will be, a necessity in the constitution and development of the Church. The Creed is the testimony of the Church to divine truth: thus the Church declares what it believes; thus it reproves the errors and unbelief of the world; thus it protects itself from the peril of false doctrines taught within its fold; thus it instructs its members in the knowledge of the divine word. Our inquiry now pertains, not to the necessity of Creeds as a defence of faith against those without the Church who assail the truth, such as avowed atheists and infidels; but to what extent human ordinances may defend the faith against those within the Church, of whom it is alleged that they are false teachers who misunderstand or pervert the truth of the divine word. The subjective views of the regenerate concerning the meaning of the divine word, are not exempt from the influence of the law of sin which is in their members, and which has impaired their mental as well as moral nature. Notwithstanding this incomplete sanctification of all believers, which has occasioned the various and discordant Creeds of Christendom, Christ declares that the Holy Spirit will guide the Church into all truth, John xvi. 13, and that it can "know of the doctrine whether it be of God," John vii. 17. He has promised furthermore to be with his Church all the days of time, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Hence, that which especially marks and identifies the Church throughout her history, is that she endeavors to "hold fast the form of sound words," 2 Tim. i. 13. She can suffer no man to take her crown, Rev. iii. 11. This principle, which justifies the Church in establishing symbols as the evidence and defence of her faith, and for the rejection of error, is recognized throughout Christendom. Hence, the first controverted question in the Church respecting symbols of faith is not whether they are necessary, but what is their proper limitation. The entire Christian Church admits the necessity of contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, so far as the three Œcumenical Creeds are concerned, viz., the Apostles', the Nicene, and Athanasian, because those symbols express the subjective faith alike of the Protestant and Roman Churches. If we consider the doctrine which especially distinguishes the Protestant from the Roman Church, viz., Justification by faith alone, we find that doctrine engrafted on the various creeds of Protestantism as "the article of a standing or a falling Church"; over against the doctrine of the Roman Church, that there is a justifying merit in good works as well as in faith. When we consider the Protestant Church exclusively, we observe, however, a wide diversity of opinion respecting the doctrines of the divine word. United in the faith which exhibits the doctrines essential to salvation, and testifies to the errors of Romanism, the Protestant Church is itself divided upon doctrines which although not essential to salvation are fundamental with respect to a right understanding of the divine word. Hence the question occurs; shall the Church contend earnestly for the faith as it is expressed in the three Œcumenical Creeds, or does fidelity to the truth relate likewise to those doctrines concerning which there is diversity of opinion in the Protestant Church? Shall those doctrines alone, which are essential to salvation be embodied in a confession of faith, or those likewise, which are essential to a right and full understanding of the word? It must be admitted that there is a relative value, so far as the salvation of the soul is concerned, between doctrines confessed in the early creeds of the Universal Christian Church, and those doctrines which have divided Protestantism into denominations. Nevertheless the divine word indicates that the doctrines which divide the Protestant Church are fundamental with respect to the purity and completeness of the faith and to the welfare of the soul, "All scripture is given by inspiration of



God, and is profitable for doctrine, etc., \* \* that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. The command of Christ in "teaching all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. xxviii. 20. "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 19. All the doctrines of Scripture are so related and essential that "the whole body" is "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," Eph. iv. 16. Hence error with respect to one doctrine affects to some degree the clearest apprehension of another, even as "the shattering of a single nerve in one extremity of the body is felt throughout the system."\* "Truth is an undivided whole, the component parts of which are essentially connected, no one article of faith can be undervalued without affecting the integrity of the whole, (as far as an individual is personally concerned)."† To use another figure of the Apostle, whilst there is but one foundation upon which the Church can build, "for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. iii. 11, yet it matters much whether upon that foundation the Church rears the superstructure of gold and silver and precious stones, or whether it builds of wood and hay and stubble. Whilst those in the Roman or in any Protestant Church, who truly believe in Christ as their Saviour, shall be saved; yet they shall suffer loss, when they build upon the foundation of Christ, any doctrine or life not in harmony with the entire truth of the divine word, for "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire," 1 Cor. iii. 13-15. Hence those who propagate error, even through ignorance of the truth, work incalculable mischief. Instead of a stately palace they rear an unsightly structure upon the foundation which is Jesus Christ; instead of a strong and beautiful Church built of the pure gold and silver and precious stones of divine truth, we see the frail and unsightly wood, hay and stubble, as an exhibition of the Temple of

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\* C. F. Schaeffer, D. D.

† G. V. Lechler, D. D., *Com. Acts*, p. 81, Dr. C. F. Schaeffer's tr.



God. Hence all the doctrines of the divine word may be viewed as fundamental in their relation to the system of divine truth; for while some are fundamental with respect to the salvation of the soul, all are fundamental with respect to a right knowledge and faith of the word. The Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes the importance of this principle more fully than any other portion of Protestantism, as the extent of her symbolical books apparently attests. Her confessions declare her faith in regard to every important doctrine that is taught in the divine word, and her position is clearly and fully defined in the great controversies of the Church, respecting the faith once delivered to the saints.

*b. Doctrinal Basis of the General Synod.* The doctrinal basis of our General Synod, as a human ordinance in the Church, seems practically to represent the subjective faith of the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in its antithesis to those doctrines which especially mark and identify the Roman Church and the Reformed denominations; without, however, representing the positive faith which particularly characterizes the Evangelical Lutheran Church and which distinguishes it from the various denominations of Christendom; for in withholding its assent to all the symbolical books, as a correct explanation and defence of the doctrines taught in the Augsburg Confession, it implies that its phrase "fundamental doctrines," refers only to doctrines which are fundamental to salvation, and not to doctrines which are fundamental to a right understanding of divine truth as represented in all the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession. The ethical defence of the doctrinal basis of the General Synod is, that it rightly represents the subjective faith of its adherents, who, on the one hand, cannot conscientiously assent to a Roman or Reformed confession of faith, but on the other hand, are unprepared to accept the doctrines which especially identify the Church of the unaltered Augsburg Confession. As an organ of providence the General Synod has occupied a conspicuous sphere in the development of our Church in this land. Such, however, is the importance of the doctrines exhibited and confessed in all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in their relation to the entire system of truth revealed in the divine word; such is the unwillingness of the General Synod to affirm the error of those Symbols in its doctrinal basis; and such is the desirableness of positive, accurate and definite faith respecting them; that it would seem

to be a just inference that the true vocation of the General Synod, not unmindful of her external development and devotional life, is the determination of the truth or error of those doctrines which it is yet unprepared to confess and defend. Such a calling is indicated by tendencies in the Evangelical Lutheran Church to withhold pulpit and altar fellowship from those who do not confess the doctrines of the divine word as they are taught in her symbolical books. Thus in reply to the question, whether all who live in the Church are to be admitted to the Holy Supper? Gerhard (x. 381) says: "Nor are all Christians promiscuously to be admitted to the Lord's Supper; but according to the rule of Paul, only those who examine themselves, 1 Cor. xi. 28, *i. e.* those who condemn themselves, v. 31: those who distinguish the body of the Lord from ordinary food, v. 29, and who show forth the Lord's death, v. 26. \* \* \* \* Therefore all those are excluded who are either unwilling or unable to examine themselves, as (1) those who are defiled with heresy, *i. e.* who pertinaciously and refractorily persevere in error concerning the foundation of the faith, neglecting all kinds of admonition; for, since by their heresy they cut themselves off from the fellowship of the true Church they also cannot at all be admitted to the Sacraments, which are the blessings peculiar to the Church; such are, *e. g.*, those who pertinaciously deny the true and substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper. Matt. vii. 6; Phil. iii. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 29."\*

This exclusiveness is to be regarded as a manifestation of the confidence of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in all her symbols as correct exhibitions of divine truth, and of her fidelity to guard its purity. Hence her "close communion" is not so much a challenge as an appeal, to those "who are nigh," as well as "to those who are afar off," "to search" and "try" her symbols of faith, either to prove that they are built upon the treacherous sands of error, or else to learn that they abide upon the enduring rock of truth.

*c. The Augsburg Confession.* This year, distinguished as the sabbatic year of jubilee in the history of the Augsburg Confession, the oldest of denominational creeds, finds that symbol yet abiding in the bloom and vigor of its youth. In its eventful experience of seven semi-centennials, it has passed through fire and flood, and like our Lord, whose person and work it teaches us rightly to appre-

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\* Quoted in Schmid's *Dogmatik*, Drs. Hay and Jacobs' trans., p. 592.

hend, it has often been, as to its integrity, despised and rejected of men, yet it survives to-day with more adherents than are claimed by all other creeds of Protestantism combined. Containing in the germ those doctrines which are more fully developed throughout the symbolical books, it seems to be the first necessary basis, upon which our Evangelical Zion can hope to realize an organic unity of faith. Indeed, says Rev. Dr. Krauth, in the introduction to his translation of the Augsburg Confession: "To it the eyes of all deep thinkers have been turned as to the star of hope amid the internal strifes of nominal Protestantism." He then quotes Gieseler, the great Reformed Church historian, as saying: "If the question be, which among all Protestant confessions is best adapted for forming the foundation of a union among Protestant Churches, we declare ourselves unreservedly for the Augsburg Confession." As the Magna Charta of the Reformation, as the symbol of faith for forty millions of the Protestant Church, as a clear and correct exhibition of those doctrines of the divine word of which it treats, the Augsburg Confession must ever stand preëminent among the human ordinances instituted in the visible Church.

We began, in the order of our discussion of specific human ordinances in the Church, with the consideration of the institution of the Lord's day; we end with that of the Augsburg Confession. If there is a relative value and importance among human ordinances in the Church, we may say of these two, that they are the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end; they are the bright and morning stars. Yet we may not undervalue any human ordinance in the Church, established in conformity with the principles enjoined in the fifteenth article of the Augustana, "for as the body is not one member but many," 1 Cor. xii. 14, "and the head cannot say to the feet I have no need of you," so it must be said of every human ordinance rightly instituted in the Church, as has been already said of the value of every doctrine taught in the divine word, that "the whole body is fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part." Eph. iv. 16.

# ARTICLE XVI.

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## CIVIL POLITY AND GOVERNMENT.

BY L. E. ALBERT, D. D.

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THE Sixteenth Article of the Augsburg Confession treats of Civil Affairs, and reads as follows :

### XVI. DE REBUS CIVILIBUS.

De rebus civilibus docent, quod legitimæ ordinationes civiles sint bona opera Dei, quod Christianis liceat genere Magistratus, exercere, judicia, judicare res ex Imperatoriis et aliis præsentibus legibus, supplicia jure constituere jure bellare, militare, lege contrahere, tenere proprium, jusjurandum postulantis Magistratibus dare, ducere uxorem, nubere.

Damnant Anabaptistas, qui intardicunt hæc civilia officia Christianis. Damnant et illos, qui evangelicam perfectionem non collocant in timore Dei et fide, sed in deserendis civilibus officiis quia evangelium tradit justitiam æternam cordia. Interim non dissipat politiam aut oeconiam, sed maxime postulat conservare tranquam ordinationes Dei, et in talibus ordinationibus exercere caritatem. Itaque necessario debent Christiani obedire Magistratibus suis et legibus; nisi cum jubent peccare, tunc enim magis debent obedire Deo quam hominibus.\*

### XVI. OF CIVIL AFFAIRS.

Concerning civil affairs our churches teach that legitimate civil enactments are good works of God : that it is lawful for Christians to hold civil offices, to pronounce judgment, and decide cases according to the imperial and other existing laws : to inflict just punishment, wage just wars, and serve in them : to make lawful contracts; hold property; to make oath when required by the magistrates; to marry and be married.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who forbid to Christians the performance of these civil duties. They also condemn those who make evangelical perfection consist not in the fear of God and in faith, but in the abandonment of all civil

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\* Hase Libri Symbolici.

duties; because the Gospel teaches the necessity of ceaseless righteousness of heart, while it does not abolish the duties of civil and domestic life, but specially requires them to be observed as ordinances of God, and performed in the spirit of Christian love. Hence Christians ought necessarily to yield obedience to their civil officers and laws; unless when they command something sinful; for then they ought to obey God rather than man.\*

#### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

Many things were attributed to the Reformation by its enemies which had no legitimate connection with it. Among these were the disturbances caused in the German Empire by the Anabaptists. The earliest historical notice of this sect is connected with these disturbances, originating with "the prophets of Zwickau," which began in the year 1521, and culminated in a fierce civil war. The leader of these prophets was Thomas Münzer, the Lutheran pastor of Zwickau, who by the perusal of the works of the mystic Tauler had become a wild fanatic. Being deposed from his post at Zwickau, he retired into Thuringia, where he propagated his tenets. Those tenets were:

"(1) That the true word of God is not Holy Scripture, but an internal inspiration. (2) That the baptism of infants is unlawful. (3) That there must be a visible kingdom of Christ upon earth. (4) And that in the kingdom of Christ all must be equal and must enjoy a community of goods." † At this crisis, the long-impending rebellion of the peasantry against the nobility broke out in southern Germany, and in a short time spread through Suabia, Franconia and Alsace. At the first breaking out of this war, it seemed to have been kindled only by civil and political views, and aimed only at the diminution of the tasks imposed upon the peasants, and to their obtaining a greater measure of liberty than they had hitherto enjoyed. But no sooner had the enthusiast Münzer put himself at the head of this outrageous rabble, than the face of things changed entirely, and the civil commotions were turned into a religious war. Although there was a difference of sentiment among the seditious multitude, and they were greatly divided in their demands, yet their leading views, according to Dr. Dorner, were as follows: "The Anabaptists are indeed amongst themselves very different. Some are rather of a passive nature, and approach in their appear-

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\* General Synod's Translation.

† Blunt's History of Sects and Heresies.



ance to certain monastic orders, such as the God resigned praying Baptists, who did almost nothing but pray, and made praying their work; the secluded spiritual Baptists, who could not see laughter nor mirth without sighing, and who, after the fashion of the monastic orders, laid down definite rules with regard to clothes, walking and standing; so too the ecstatic and the silent brethren. Others are urged rather by practical impulses, whether it be to introduce by force the holy kingdom, or to employ themselves in teaching, as the apostolic brethren, who preached repentance, evangelized, forsook wife and children, and, after the fashion of the begging orders, let themselves be nourished by others. Others again, the so-called free brethren, are Antinomians: after having received true baptism, it is impossible to sin any more; community of goods and wives belong to the holy kingdom; nothing external is of any importance. God looks upon the heart, hence one may even deny the truth under persecution. Still all these tendencies have also a common family likeness. Besides the above described elevation, after an enthusiastic fashion, of the spirit of the internal Word of God above the Holy Scriptures, they have a *church ideal*, which is essentially impregnated by Romish ideas. Their doctrine of faith in relation to works, is also anything but the reformation doctrine: it rather occupies essentially the Romish standpoint. Man becomes pious before God not by faith without works, but by the infusion of love and holiness (which most certainly evidences itself according to their views in a sort of communism). \* \* And finally it stands related to the Romish Church, in that both occupy a kindred position towards the State. Whilst both aim in the most decided manner at the State form of community, for what they call the Church, they both regard the State in itself as profane in its nature and as having no proper independent moral significance. The Anabaptists forbid Christians to take offices of civil authority, oaths, or military service, although they do not disdain the means of external compulsion, which only become the State, for the purpose of carrying out their theory. \* \* They would that only the exclusively divine will should prevail, in whatever form it may make itself known. They are thus the enemy of all natural human ordinances and would have them supplanted by theocratical.”\* In carrying out these principles they rushed without reflection or fore-

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\* History of Prot. Theology.

sight into every act of violence and cruelty, and committed disorders which rendered them justly odious in the sight of all law-abiding people. To put down this rebellion, it was necessary for the princes of the empire to resort to arms. Accordingly, in 1525, the turbulent malcontents were defeated in a pitched battle at Mülhausen, and Münzer the ring-leader was put to death. Of course the enemies of the Reformation unceasingly repeated that Luther and his doctrines had caused the insurrection. They asked the Reformer with a malignant sneer, if he had not at length discovered that it was easier to kindle a conflagration than to put it out. It was unfair however to charge these troubles upon the Reformation, though they may have been indirectly influenced by it. The event certainly favored liberal ideas, but the causes which led to these disturbances existed long before the Reformation. The Reformation only gave new force to the discontentment already fermenting. Luther did all in his power at first to prevent and then to put down these agitations. "Revolt," he had said, "does not produce the desired amelioration and it is condemned by God. What is revolt, if it be not a man's revenging himself? The devil tries to stir up to revolt those who embrace the Gospel, with the view of bringing reproach upon it: but they who have rightly understood my doctrine, do not revolt." "A Christian," he would say, "ought to endure death an hundred times rather than take the slightest imaginable part in the revolt of the peasants." To the elector he wrote: "What gives me particular delight is, that these enthusiasts themselves are boasting to all who choose to listen to them, that they do not belong to us. It is the Spirit that impels them, they say; and as for me, I answer: It is an evil spirit that bears no better fruits than the pillage of monasteries and of churches: the greatest robbers on earth are capable of doing as much." In fact, Luther had never ceased to combat the rebellion. "Not satisfied with using his pen, even while the insurrection was as yet in all its force, he left Wittenberg and traversed some of the most disturbed districts. He preached, he strove to calm men's minds, and his hand with a might that it derived from God, diverted, appeased, and restored to their proper bed the furious overflowing waters." \*

From all this it can be seen, that when the Reformers came to the preparation of the Augsburg Confession, they would embrace

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\* D'Aubigne Hist. of Reformation.

the opportunity then presented to set themselves right before the world on Civil Affairs, and show in what Government consisted, what were its functions, and what were the rights and duties of those who were its subjects. This was done in the Article under consideration. To ascertain the correctness of this delivery, let us look at some of the theories which men have held in reference to Civil Government.

#### THEORIES OF GOVERNMENT.

The theories which men have held in regard to Civil Government may all be reduced to two: the theory of the *social compact*, and the theory of *divine institution*. The former theory is thus condensed by Dr. Dwight: "This doctrine supposes that mankind were originally without any government; and that in an absolute state of nature they voluntarily came together for the purpose of constituting a body politic, creating rulers, prescribing their functions, and making laws directing their own civil duties. It supposes that they entered into grave and philosophic deliberations; individually consented to be bound by the will of the majority; and cheerfully gave up the wild life of savage liberty, for restraints, which however necessary and useful no savage could ever brook, even for a day. Antecedently to such an assembly and its decisions, the doctrine supposes that men have no civil rights, obligations, or duties, and, of course, that those who do not consent to be bound by such a compact, are now not the subjects of either: such a compact, in the apprehension of the abettors of this doctrine, being that which creates all the civil rights, obligations, and duties of man."\* It is a favorite theory of the advocates of this doctrine, that "society exists by virtue of each individual conceding some portion of his rights in order to preserve the rest, and that society has no rights beyond the limits of such concession." The doctrine is thus stated by its great expounder, the Marquis Beccaria: "It was necessity that forced men to give up a part of their liberty: it is certain then that every individual would choose to put into the public stock the smallest portions possible; as much only as was sufficient to engage others to defend it. The aggregate of these, the smallest portions possible, forms the right of punishment: all that extends beyond this is abuse, not justice." Applying this theory to the right of society over life, he says:

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\* Dwight's Theology, Vol. III., page 324.

"Did any one ever give to others the right of taking away his life? Is it possible that in the smallest portions of the liberty of each, sacrificed to the good of the public, can be contained the greatest of all good, life? If it were so, how shall it be reconciled to the maxim which tells us that a man has no right to kill himself, which he certainly must have if he could give it away to another."\*

This same idea is maintained by many who are seeking to abolish capital punishment. Its advocates insist that "no man ever bartered away his original right in his own existence;" that the right to life is "a reserved right which was never surrendered to society." In a report to the Massachusetts Legislature, Mr. Rantoul says: "When we surrendered to society the smallest possible portion of our liberty, to enable us the better to retain the aggregate of rights which we did not surrender, did we concede our title to that life with which our Creator has endowed us? Is it to be conceived that we have consented to hold the tenure of our earthly existence at the discretion or the caprice of a majority, whose erratic legislation no man can calculate beforehand? While our object was to preserve as little impaired as might be possible all our rights, which are all of them comprehended in the right to enjoy life, can we have agreed to forfeit that right to live while God shall spare our lives, which is the essential precedent condition of all our other rights? Have we entered into any such compact? The *burden of proof* is wholly upon those who affirm that we have so agreed. Let it be shown that mankind in general, or the inhabitants of this commonwealth in particular, have agreed to hold their lives as a conditional grant from the State. Let it be shown that any one individual understanding the bargain, and being free to dissent from it, ever voluntarily placed himself in such a miserable vassalage. Let there at least be shown some reason for supposing that any sane man has, of his own accord, bartered away his original right in his own existence, that his government may tyrannize more heavily over him and his fellows, when all the purposes of good government may be amply secured at so much cheaper a purchase. In no instance can this preposterous sacrifice be implied. It must be shown by positive proof that it has been made, and until this is undeniably established, *the right of life remains among those reserved rights which we have not yielded up to society.*" This theory proves too much. Carried

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\*Essay on Crimes and Punishments.

to its legitimate conclusions, it runs into absurdity. If this theory were correct, society would have no right to imprison or fine any of its members. Government would be a mere rope of sand. Convictions for crime would be an utter impossibility. Every criminal could plead that he never entered into a compact which involved the surrender of personal liberty, or agreed to suffer *any* penalty which the law might inflict upon him. Such a theory, reduced to practice, would disarrange society and resolve it into chaos. The entire fallacy of this theory lies in the fact that man is regarded as being naturally an isolated and independent being, as having no necessary connection with his fellows, and as being led to associate together by express or tacit consent, only for mutual protection and advantage. But such was not the natural condition of man. Man, from the very beginning, has existed in society. He was born in it, his very existence is a proof of it. Says Blackstone: "We cannot believe, with some theoretical writers, that there ever was a time when there was no such thing as society. \* \* This notion of an actually existing unconnected state of nature is too wild to be seriously admitted: and besides it is plainly contradictory to the revealed accounts of the primitive origin of mankind, and their preservation two thousand years afterwards: both of which were effected by the means of single families. These formed the first society among themselves; which every day extended its limits, and when it grew too large to subsist with convenience in that pastoral state wherein the patriarchs appear to have lived, it necessarily subdivided itself by various migrations into more. Afterwards, as agriculture increased, which employs and can maintain a much greater number of hands, migrations became less frequent; and various tribes which had formerly separated, re-united, sometimes by compulsion and conquest, sometimes by accident, and sometimes perhaps by compact."\* Where man therefore exists there is society, and where society exists there also in some sense does the *state* exist. "For when society is once formed, government results of course as necessary to preserve and keep that society in order." Lieber, in his *Political Ethics*, says: "Human society exists of necessity, and the state being part of the human society \* \* it exists likewise of necessity. \* \* The state is aboriginal with man: it is no voluntary association, no contrivance of art, nor invention of suffering, no

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\* Commentaries, Vol. I. Introduction.



company of shareholders, no machine, no work of contract by individuals who lived previously out of it, no necessary evil, no ill of humanity which will be cured in time and by civilization, no accidental thing, no institution above and separate from society, no instrument for one or a few—the State is a form and faculty of mankind to lead the species towards perfection—it is the glory of man." This theory of a social compact is therefore a false theory. Men never stood isolated and independent as this theory represents them; they were born into the household, and the household grew into the nation. Association was not an act of their own free will; it grew out of their existence, and can never be set aside but by an act of rebellion.

Standard writers on Political Ethics have pointed out the fatal consequences attendant upon such a theory of government. They have shown most conclusively that if the social compact is the true foundation of government, then the subject ought to abide by the form of government which he finds established, be it ever so absurd, inconvenient or oppressive. If it is a despotism, he must submit to it; for by the compact he has promised obedience to it, and no man can ever withdraw himself from the obligation of his own promise. They have shown also that every violation of the compact on the part of the ruler releases the subject from his engagements, and of course from all obligation to obey the laws. "As in private contracts, the violation and non-performance of the conditions by one of the parties vacates the obligation of the other, so in the social compact every transgression amounts to a forfeiture of the government, and consequently authorizes the people to withdraw their obedience and provide for themselves a new settlement."\* Such a course would endanger the stability of any government, and lead to nothing but confusion and sedition. They have likewise pointed out how, on the same principle, "if a subject violate any of his engagements, however small, the ruler may lawfully make him an outlaw, and deprive him of every privilege which he holds as a citizen." Surely such a theory disproves itself, and contains the elements of its own overthrow.

Over and against this theory we place the other and correct theory, that Civil Government is a *divine institution*. It is not a human contrivance instituted without necessity by human caprice.

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\* Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy.

It is not the usurpation of a few over the many, which may be dispensed with whenever the many are disposed to throw it off. It belongs to the settled order of things which God has clearly willed to exist for the well-being of man. It springs out of the necessities of things, and embraces in its range the entire race. It is indispensable to human happiness; to the safety of life, liberty and property; to peace and good order; to morals and religion; to the very existence of society itself. Without it the relations which exist between man and man cannot be perpetuated and perfected. Civil government is needful to guarantee to men their mutual rights. It is needful to check the unbridled indulgence of man's passions, to throw a safeguard around both person and property, to control the lawless and disobedient and inspire a sense of security against crime and anarchy. That Civil Government is indispensable to the highest good of man is evident from his actions. No matter what his color or race or condition, he cannot exist without some form of civil government. He must live under law, and in various ways he gives shape and utterance to this feeling. His conviction is deep and earnest, though often rudely expressed, that government is a necessary and unavoidable accompaniment of his existence, and that the end of government is the good of mankind. And this is the conviction of the Jew and the Mohammedan, the Papist and the Protestant, the Atheist and the Pagan. In view of these facts, there is force in the declaration of Hume when he says, "As it is impossible for the human race to subsist, at least in any comfortable or secure state, without the protection of government, this institution must certainly have been intended by that beneficent Being who means the good of all his creatures, and as it has universally, in fact, taken place in all countries and in all ages, we may conclude with still greater certainty that it was intended by that Omniscient Being who can never be deceived by any event or operation." \*

The form of government has not been prescribed by the Most High. There has been the patriarchal form of government and the monarchical. There have been aristocracies and democracies, oligarchies and republics. There have been governments, absolute and limited, pure and mixed. The form of government, as well as the persons who administer it, must naturally depend on the circumstances and will of the people. And yet whatever the form

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\* Hume's Essays, Vol. III., p. 510.

may be, it is an ordinance of God. Men may adopt a particular form of government, but government lies back of their action and has for its foundation the will of God. The essence of government is not in human enactments, but in the constitution ordained by God. Justly therefore has it been said, that he who tramples on it strikes a death-blow at an ordinance of God. In this view government has a peculiar sanctity. It rises before us as a system that should be inviolate. We feel that it is the supporter of our best interests, that it is linked to our very destiny.

Let us see now how this view agrees with the Scriptures. Let us look first at the remarkable passage in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. In the translation of Dean Alford it reads as follows: "Let every soul submit himself to the authorities that are above him; for there is no authority except from God. So that he which setteth himself against the authority resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves condemnation. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. Dost thou desire not to be afraid of the authority? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise for the same; for he is God's minister unto thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he weareth not the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger for wrath unto him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs submit yourselves, not only because of the wrath but also for your conscience sake. For this cause ye also pay tribute; for they are ministers of God attending continually to this very thing. Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." In writing to Titus the same apostle says: "Put them in mind to submit themselves to government, to authorities, to obey magistrates," and writing to Timothy, he exhorts that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks, be made for all men, for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and gravity." To the same purpose is the language of Peter: "Honor all men; Love the brotherhood; Fear God; Honor the king." He also declares that the Lord "knoweth how to preserve the unrighteous unto the day of judgment under punishment, but chiefly them that go after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise governments. Presumptuous, self-willed, they are not afraid to rail at dignities."

These sentences, taken from different parts of the New Testament, all teach, with more or less clearness, that Civil Government is an institution of divine appointment, demanding a faithful and cheerful obedience. It is true that the different modifications of government are man's creation; but having become so under that wise ordination of which God was the author, they have in themselves a vitality and a binding force that commends them to our regard. And it is on this ground that the Scriptures give to government a lofty character. "They call upon man to hold in high regard its external form, even if it is the work of man's creation. They exhort men to submit to kings and governors, because they are those whom God has ordained to be ministers of good. Man is not to make void what God foresaw would be for his highest good." It may be well in this connection to add, that while Christianity has nothing to do with the *forms* of human government, it does not forbid us to entertain preferences in regard to them. Says Dr. Wayland: "I do not say that Christianity does not create a tendency to free institutions. I firmly believe that it does. Teaching universal equality of right, it could not do otherwise. All the true freedom on earth springs essentially from the Gospel. It is intended, however, to improve the condition of society, not by revolution and bloodshed, but by instilling into our bosoms a spirit of piety towards God and of justice and mercy towards men. While Christianity is doing this, it is rendering good government necessary, and bad government impracticable. In the meantime it treats every existing government, in obedience to the precept given by our Lord, 'Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. The civil authority is established: the image is stamped, and the superscription is engraved. The evidence of the actual existence of this authority is in the hands of every man. Its precept then is, Render to society, as represented by the magistracy of its choice, whatever society can rightfully claim. Such I understand to be the teaching of Jesus Christ.'"\*

And with these views the Confessors are in full accord, for without committing themselves to any particular form of government, they simply declare that "legitimate civil enactments are *good works of God*." Government, then, being of divine origin, they proceed to point out

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\* University Sermons, page 256.



## THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF SUBJECTS.

We will understand more clearly their declaration if we glance briefly at the teachings of the Church up to that period on the subject of Christian morals. A scientific system of morals is nowhere taught in the New Testament. Neither Jesus nor his disciples taught it in that form. During the first three centuries Christendom was engaged in a conflict with the prevailing religions of the Jews and heathen, and with the philosophy of antiquity, so that the teachers of the early Christian Church were prevented from thinking of a scientific development of morality. Their time was fully occupied in meeting the accusations of their enemies; in answering the objections which were brought against Christianity; and with exhibiting the excellencies of their religion, in contrast with the Jewish and heathen superstitions. But after this period, began to appear those corruptions in the morals of the Catholic Church which gradually increased, until virtue itself was endangered. The tendency then was towards a gloomy austerity, and the greatest importance was attached to retirement from active life to solitude, fasting, celibacy and contemplative exercises. Realizing how little such principles were adapted to the common relations of life, and that naught but confusion must arise from their general adoption, a distinction began to be made in morality. "*Common* morality was distinguished from the *higher*, and all solitary discipline and self-denial were ascribed to the latter, to which men could devote themselves only by freeing themselves from all ordinary obligations.

\* \* In the fourth and fifth centuries, the corruptions of Christian morals not only continued, but grew worse and were multiplied. Every form of superstition gained the ascendancy among Christians: ceremonies were multiplied in public worship and an extravagant importance was attached to them, pilgrimages, fasts, a *life of celibacy* and voluntary poverty, and *freedom from all civil relations* were declared conducive to the highest degree of holiness. \* \* Then mysticism helped on this state of things. According to the mystic theology, the souls of men were deemed to be actual parts and effluences of the Godhead: their connection with bodies and inclination to sensual enjoyment were considered proofs of their degradation and pollution: and since their highest bliss and glorification on account of their relationship with God consisted in nothing but their return to God, and in an entire confluence with the pure, original



fountain of their being, it must of course be considered duty to withdraw as much as possible from every thing sensual, to free themselves from the regular business of life, and in undisturbed seclusion seek after union with God."\*

And this spirit pervaded the Church when the Confessors were called upon to embody their views in regard to the relations of Christian men with the practical business of life. Especially was this true of the Anabaptists. In the Formula of Concord, in Art. XII., of *Other Heresies and Sects*, under the head of "Anabaptist Articles which are intolerable in the commonwealth," we find the following :

1. That the office of the magistrate is not under the New Testament a condition of life that pleases God.

2. That a Christian man cannot discharge the office of magistrate with a safe and quiet conscience.

3. That a Christian man cannot with a safe conscience administer and execute the office of a magistrate, if matters so require, against the wicked, nor can subjects implore for their defense that power which the magistrate has received of God.

4. That a Christian man can not with a safe conscience take an oath, nor swear obedience and fidelity to his prince or magistrate.

5. That the magistrate under the New Testament can not, with a good conscience, punish criminals with death.

Also under the head of "Anabaptist Articles which cannot be tolerated in daily life," the following :

1. That a godly man can not with safe conscience hold or possess any property, but that whatever means he may possess, he is bound to bestow them all as common good.

2. That a Christian man can not, with a safe conscience, either keep an inn, or carry on trade, or forge weapons.

3. That it is permitted married people who think differently in religion to divorce themselves and to contract matrimony with some other persons who agree with them in religion.

We cannot but admire their breadth of view, their manly courage, their sound sense and their true interpretation of the Word of God, when the Confessors declared "that it is lawful for Christians to hold civil offices, to pronounce judgment, and decide cases according to the imperial and other existing laws: to inflict just punishments, wage just wars, and serve in them; to make lawful contracts;

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\* Christian Examiner.

hold property; to make oath when required by the magistrates; to marry and be married."

Let us examine somewhat in detail, what is here specified.

#### ON THE LAWFULNESS OF CHRISTIANS TO HOLD CIVIL OFFICES.

The saying of our Blessed Lord to "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," should settle the right and duty of a Christian man to concern himself with civil affairs. Under the Old Testament dispensation, the prophets took a prominent part in the politics of their time, either protesting against the abuses of justice in the internal administration of the nation's affairs, or criticising without fear or favor its foreign policy. To claim rights, however, is to concede corresponding duties. The State offers to its citizens certain advantages, such as security from foreign foes, protection of life and property, and the management of affairs of public utility, and no one has a right to accept these advantages without discharging the duties of a citizen to the best of his ability. The neglect of the duties of citizenship is selfish: it is an attempt to obtain the advantages enjoyed by our neighbors while we shrink from bearing our share of the corresponding responsibilities. There are a thousand things required for the welfare of a great nation, which can only be accomplished through its acting in its collective capacity. The members of a nation are mutually necessary, and have duties towards one another, just as the members of any other social body. Suppose all stood aloof from civil duties. There could be then no government, no regulation of human affairs for the public good, because there would be no persons left to undertake it. The absurdity of such a position is obvious. No doubt a man may be happier who minds his own concerns, and does not trouble himself about public affairs. But does he discharge his duties to his fellow beings in so doing? That he has such duties cannot be denied. Our duty to our neighbor comes next to our duty to God. We are bound to promote his happiness as far as lies in our power. To do this it will be necessary to see to it that he is under good government. A good government depends in a great degree upon its rulers. Our first duty then, where it is in our power, is to secure such rulers as in our judgment will seek to promote the legitimate ends of all good government. These rulers should be men not only endowed with the requisite talents for their position, but likewise men of pure and

unexceptionable characters in private life. The very existence of a government is threatened, as well as the welfare of the citizens endangered, when evil-minded and ill-disposed persons are put in power, who will pervert that power to promote their own ends and strengthen themselves in office by rewarding their partisans. If, therefore, it is the bounden duty of every honest and upright man, of every sincere Christian, to secure rulers who will only be a terror to the evil and not to the good, then it is equally the duty of every good man to accept office, if it is conferred upon him. The objection to a Christian taking part in civil affairs, because it brings him into associations unfavorable to his piety, is not well founded. It is this very withdrawal from political life, which tends to the injury of society and an aggravation of the evils under which it suffers. Its result is to place the regulation of trade, the administration of justice and the guardianship of the public purse and peace, in the hands of the worst of mankind. Surely this is selfishness under the mask of religion, a cowardly shrinking from necessary perils, and a distrust of divine help, which are essentially wrong.

It has been well said that the notions and practices of many who teach this abstinence from the duties of citizenship, while they live luxuriously in a peace and comfort which others, secure for them, are just a fresh illustration of the old mistake which confounds asceticism with religion, and blasphemes the divine name by pronouncing that evil which God has ordained for the well-being and happiness of mankind. In our own republican form of government, in which the *people* are regarded as the only source of power, it will be our own fault if we have not efficient rulers. With the elective franchise in our possession, it remains with us to determine the character of the governing powers. The exercise of this right should be regarded by us as a solemn duty. One of the greatest dangers to our free institutions arises from the fact that the most disinterested will be and are inclined to neglect this privilege or duty, leaving thereby the choice of our rulers in the hands of those who have most to hope for from the success of their efforts. The theory of our government is that the voice of the people is the voice of God. At least, the voice of the people is the voice by which we have stipulated to be governed. To make, then, this voice the voice of God, we must not only give expression to it ourselves, by conscientiously using the elective franchise, but also by educating intellectually, morally,

and religiously, all who utter it. The masses *must* be educated. If they be *not* educated, power may come into the hands of the few, and of the few who have the least stake in the welfare of the republic. The voice of the people must be the voice of independent intellect, and not the voice of bold and designing men, who take advantage of ignorance and party ties to seize the reins of power and promote their own selfish schemes and personal ambition. A republican government is founded on the idea that there may be in the mass of the citizens sufficient intelligence and virtue to make wise laws and execute them faithfully. Thus the power that is in the possession of the people must be put again into the hands of the few. Into whose hands shall it be given? This is the question for every honest citizen to settle. Intelligent and virtuous people will have no difficulty in settling it. The wisest and best men in the community will be chosen to be the depositaries of this power. By so doing our republic would not only be safe, but would be the very ideal of a perfect government. It is possible, however, for a very different order of things to take place. Men may secure office and power through trickery and cunning, through party management and organization. They may play upon the ignorance of the masses, upon their fears and hopes, until they sway them at their will, and cause them without a struggle to do their bidding. In such cases, the elective franchise is *not* the free and spontaneous expression of the popular will. It is simply an instrument by which political adventurers elevate themselves to office. The form of the republic may then remain, but the spirit has perished. The elective franchise exercised in ignorance by some and improperly used by others, is directly antagonistic to the spirit of a free government. It is just here where our institutions are in the greatest danger. Unless the masses can be so educated as to give an intelligent and honest suffrage, they will be governed by a few for their own purposes. Their passions and prejudices will be their masters, and they will become the servants of their servants. Of all governments such is the worst, because it is the government of a deluded or intimidated multitude. To elevate the masses therefore is a religious duty. It is equally a religious duty to seek moral and religious worth, as essential qualifications for high public station. Whoever then has moral and religious worth, whoever is so situated as to render him in the opinion of his fellow-citizens a suitable person for public office, has not

only a right to accept such office when tendered, but is inexcusable if he holds back upon private motives.

#### ON GIVING JUDGMENT AND DECIDING CASES ACCORDING TO LAW.

If it is lawful for Christians to hold civil offices, then it legitimately follows that the duties connected with such offices must be discharged by them. To pronounce judgment and decide cases, naturally grow out of the proper execution of the laws, which every government finds necessary for the preservation of its own existence, and for the protection of the interests of society. Perhaps there is no duty which the magistrate is called upon to perform more frequently than "to inflict just punishment" for offences committed. This subject of punishment has occasioned much discussion, and given rise to a great variety of opinions. The Confessors undoubtedly occupied the right ground, when they maintained that it was proper "to inflict just punishment." Punishment, in its most general sense, is defined to be the infliction of some evil upon an individual, with the intention that he should suffer this evil, and with a reference to some act done or omitted. In its legal sense, punishment is the infliction of some evil, according to judicial forms, upon an individual convicted of some act forbidden by law, and with the intention of preventing the recurrence of such acts. That punishment for crime is justifiable is almost self-evident. Laws must be made against crimes which strike at the great objects of civil society, and these laws must have an efficient sanction. Says Jeremy Bentham:\* "If we were to regard the crime which has been committed as an insulated event that could not recur, the punishment would be wholly thrown away: it would be only adding one evil to another. But when we consider that a crime left unpunished would leave the way towards the same offence open both to the former delinquent and to all others under the influence of similar motives, we come to view the punishment inflicted upon the individual as a safeguard to all. Punishment, however vile an instrument in itself, and however repugnant to generous sentiments, rises into a blessing of the highest order, when regarded, not as an act of anger or resentment against a guilty or an unfortunate person who has yielded to hurtful propensities, but as a sacrifice indispensably necessary to the public safety." This opinion is a sufficient answer to the objections of

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\* Bentham's Theory of Punishment, Ed. Rev., Vol. XXII, page 5.



many, who say that punishment cannot remedy the evil committed—that it cannot revive the man who has been murdered by killing the murderer, nor rebuild the dwelling which is burned by destroying the perpetrator of the ruin; and that to do so can be defended on no better principle than the unchristian spirit of revenge. Revenge does not enter into the idea of “just punishment.” If society cannot punish a wrong-doer without malice, neither can God. Punishment is inflicted to make crime odious, and to prevent its further commission upon the part of the perpetrator of the crime, or the remaining members of society. It is true that punishment is only one of the agents which society has at its command for the prevention of crime, but it is a very important one. The fact that it must be called upon when all other means have failed proves its absolute necessity. It shows that the magistrate bears the sword by divine appointment, and inflicts punishment in defence of society. And this punishment in certain contingencies may extend even to the taking of life. Especially is this true for the extreme crime of murder, to which the practice, if not the letter, of our law has been conformed.

This right has been questioned, and where it has not been called into question, the propriety of it has been challenged. It is not our design to enter into a lengthy discussion upon this subject. Volumes have been written, and ably written, upon it. In a condensed form it has been treated in a masterly manner by Dr. S. S. Schmucker in his “Popular Theology.” Both the right and expediency of it are there fully pointed out and established. It may be sufficient to say that the weight of authority is upon the side of capital punishment for murder. The Bible evidently sanctions the *right* of civil government to inflict it. No ingenuity can alter the plain declaration, “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man,” Gen. ix. 6. Neither can any sophistry overthrow the fact that the Apostle Paul recognized capital punishment among the powers of civil magistrates. No other interpretation can be given to these declarations: “But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, *for he beareth not the sword in vain*; for he is the minister of God, a revenger of God to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” “I stand at Cæsar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an

offender, or *have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die*: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar." Neither can it be denied that the punishment of death is peculiarly appropriate in the crime of murder, and that notwithstanding all the diminutions of its efficacy, it presents to the mind an antagonistic idea most fit to encounter the temptation to the crime. At least it has always been the impression of mankind, throughout the ages, that the penalty of death should be inflicted upon the murderer whenever that penalty is necessary for the protection of the lives of others, and for the safety and defence of the community. Says a writer in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*:\* "In defence of these positions, we appeal to the common consent and consciousness of mankind, and to a deep and indestructible instinct of the human heart: a consent of consciousness impressed upon the pages of all history, both sacred and profane: exhibited with a few trifling and partial exceptions in the legislation and practice of all nations, ancient and modern, barbarous and civilized, pagan and Jewish, classical and Christian: a universal instinct, which began to utter itself in the conscience-stricken exclamations of the terrified Cain, and which has reverberated in the soul of every murderer from that day to this: which has been confirmed by the consenting voice of the poets, philosophers and sages of all time, and which, as we believe, finds a response more or less distinct in every unsophisticated human heart." This punishment, and all other "just punishments," being therefore right and proper, it remains only for every government so to execute its laws that they will not be trifled with or trampled upon with impunity. Let it be understood that the law cannot be evaded, and that punishment will inevitably follow its violation, and not only will the law itself be more respected, but punishment, in a great degree, will be lessened, and society be better protected.

#### ON WAR.

Passing from this subject, we come to the declaration that it is lawful "to wage just wars and serve in them."

There are many eminently good persons who believe that all war is opposed to Christianity, that it is wrong in its origin, in its principles, in its motives, in its means and all its legitimate results. Al-

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\**Bib. Sacra*, Vol. L., page 286.

most from the very beginning of Christianity down to the present time, men have borne their testimony against it. The absolute inconsistency of war with the Gospel, was the prevalent belief of the early Christians. Justin Martyr, quoting the prophecy of Isaiah, "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," says, "That these things have come to pass, you may be already convinced; for we who were once slayers of one another, do not now fight against our enemies." Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, discusses the same prophecy, and proves its relation to our Saviour by the fact that the followers of Jesus had neglected the weapons of war, and no longer knew how to fight. Tertullian says, "Custom can never sanction an unlawful act. And can a soldier's life be lawful when Christ has said that he who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword? Can any one who professes the peaceable doctrines of the Gospel be a soldier?" Origen, in his work against Celsus, says, "We no longer take up the sword against any nation, nor do we learn any more to make war. We have become, for the sake of Jesus, the children of peace. By our prayers we fight for our king abundantly, but take no part in his wars even though he urge us." Lactantius, who wrote during the reign of Diocletian, expressly asserts that "to engage in war cannot be lawful for the righteous man, whose warfare is that of righteousness itself. In the twelfth canon of the Council of Nice, held under the reign of Constantine in 325, we read, "A long period of excommunication is attached as a penalty to the conduct of those persons who, having once renounced the military calling, were persuaded by the force of bribes to return to it. Such a law would scarcely have been promulgated had not an opinion been entertained in the council, that *war itself* is inconsistent with the highest standard of Christian morality." And thus down through the ages and among all denominations of Christians, multitudes are found expressing similar opinions. To such, Christianity and war are irreconcilable. "Christianity," say they, "saves men; war destroys them. Christianity elevates men; war debases and degrades them. Christianity purifies men; war corrupts and defiles them. Christianity blesses men; war curses them. God says, thou shalt not kill; war says, thou shalt kill. God says, blessed are the peace-makers; war says, blessed are the war-makers. God says, love your

enemies; war says, hate them. God says, forgive men their trespasses; war says, forgive them not. God enjoins forgiveness and forbids revenge; while war scorns the former and commends the latter. God says, resist not evil; war says, you may and must resist evil. God says, if any man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also; war says, turn *not* the other cheek, but knock the smiter down. God says, bless those who curse you; war says, curse those who curse you—curse and bless not. God says, pray for those who despitefully use you; war says, pray *against* them and seek their destruction. God says, see that none render evil for evil unto any man; war says, be sure to render evil for evil unto all that injure you. God says, overcome evil with good; war says, overcome evil with evil. God says to all men, love one another; war says, hate and kill one another. God says, they that take the sword shall *perish* by the sword; war says, they that take the sword shall be *saved* by the sword. God says, beat your swords into ploughshares, your spears into pruning hooks, and learn war no more; war says, make swords and spears still, and continue to learn war."

Sometimes the argument against war is drawn from its horrors. What is war, say they, but the destruction of men; and who can contemplate for a moment what the destruction means without sorrow of heart? Men are sent to the battle-field, and what does that mean? It means that a very large number of them will perish in the conflict, and that a greater number perhaps will be wounded and incapacitated for the active duties of life. It means that human life will be taken away under the most horrible forms. Surely such things cannot be right! Surely war is nothing else than folly, guilt and mischief!

Now it must be admitted that the spirit of war is condemned by the genius of Christianity. And by the spirit of war we mean a warlike spirit, a desire for war, or a readiness for war. Such a spirit is repugnant to the spirit of religion. It is repugnant to it because it mostly springs from vain-glory, revenge and sordid ambition. And wars arising from these evil tendencies are opposed to the genius of religion. Christianity frowns upon them. Christianity has nothing to do with vain-glory, or revenge, or sordid ambition, but to condemn the whole of them. But that just wars are opposed to Christianity is another question. We know that mankind are

made for society : society requires government, and a government without penalties, or without the right and power to enforce its penalties, and coerce the obedience of its own subjects, would be not only a nullity in practice, but a contradiction in terms. In the present state of society we cannot dispense with the use of force ; and if force be used at all, it is almost impossible to draw a distinction between the use of it in one form and another. If force be at all lawful, it must be used to accomplish the desired end. We do employ it in the prevention or repression of crime and rebellion. If this is allowable, how is it possible to distinguish between the use of physical force for internal security, and its employment for the defense of a country against external aggression ? In the latter case, the prowess of the battle-field is neither more nor less glorious than the courage and fidelity to duty shown by a policeman in capturing a desperate burglar.

"Civil society," says Wayland, "assumes the responsibility of protecting the rights of the individual. Having assumed this duty, it is under obligation to discharge it. If it cannot be discharged without the use of force, it is authorized to use force to the extent which the obligation that it has assumed renders necessary. In order to prevent wrong, it has a right to summon to its aid the assistance of every citizen, and he is bound to render it. Every individual is a member of that society which has promised to secure to his brother the enjoyment of those rights bestowed upon him by his Creator ; and that promise every man is under moral obligation to redeem. But suppose that he is exposed to injury from a member of another society, is he not entitled to the same protection ? It seems to me that he is ; and that the society to which he belongs is bound to protect him, whether he be assailed by one or many. It is the duty of the society to which he belongs to restrain *him* from inflicting injury upon all *other men*, and to prevent *all other men* from inflicting injury upon him."\* In regard to the maxims of Christianity, such as "Resist not evil : but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also," which are supposed to teach that all war is wrong, it has been justly held that they are undoubtedly precepts regulative rather of personal and private action than declarative of the procedure of governments and states. They are strong expressions, intimating the necessity of a firm curb on our passions,

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\* University Sermons.



rather than that never is evil to be resisted or wrong-doing suppressed by force. If they can be literally interpreted so as to inculcate that all war—war of defence for instance, for dearest liberty and rights is contrary to Christianity, then by the same method of interpretation governments and magistrates are also so contrary. The sword is their emblem and force is their argument, and plainly are they spoken of as the ordinance of God, whose duty it is not to bear the sword in vain, to be a terror to the ill-doer and a praise to them that do well. While, however, just wars may be waged, how rarely does the occasion arise which will justify war. The great mass of wars when tested by the maxims of Christian principle and prudence will be found wanting. Such are wars of ambition, undertaken for national glory and aggrandizement, wars of retaliation and revenge, predatory wars, wars of conquest and propagandism. For such wars we make no defence. They are unjust wars, or “murder on a large scale.” But there is a vast distinction between such wars and a war waged to suppress domestic insurrection, or to repel foreign invasion. In the case of domestic insurrection, the very existence of the government itself is threatened. Two paramount authorities can not exist in the same state. One must put the other down. This is civil war, and no matter how bloody the struggle may become, both God and man will acquit the government that seeks to uphold its authority and restore law and order throughout the land. In the case of foreign invasion, a government would be recreant to its trust that did not strain every nerve not only to maintain its own independence, but also to protect its citizens in the rights of person or property. The instinct of property and the instinct of self-preservation come immediately from God. To preserve these rights governments are instituted. They are to protect that which God has made most sacred upon earth. In an invasion this protection can only be exercised by a resort to the sword; and that government that will not resort to it, is false to its trust and beareth the sword in vain. And yet it must be conceded that while under certain circumstances war may be justifiable, it is, nevertheless, even in its mildest form, a dreadful evil. We should dread it as we do the ravages of disease or a strike of the pestilence. Let it ever be described so as to excite aversion instead of pleasure and applause. And let us hope that as Christianity is better understood and becomes more prevalent, the differences between nations and indi-

viduals will not be settled by mortal combat, but by peaceful arbitration. May that golden age soon come when men will be astonished at the barbarity of past ages, at the pretexts assigned for acts of outrage and aggression, at our armaments and military engines, at our needle guns and howitzers and "peace-makers;" our Enfield rifles, revolvers, and bowie-knives, and the whole family of deadly projectiles.

#### ON LAWFUL CONTRACTS.

As all rights, all duties, all obligations and all law, grow out of contracts, the necessity of such contracts and the power of their enforcement by law is self-evident. We shall not therefore enter into the discussion of this subject, but pass on to the consideration of the next item, viz.,

#### ON HOLDING PROPERTY.

The right to hold property seems to be inherent in our nature. Appropriation and production are born with us. From our very childhood we aim to acquire something that we may call our own. This desire for possession lies at the root of everything good in society. It stirs up man to industry, it promotes individual independence, it is the basis of social advancement, it is the producer of general prosperity, it binds society together, it is the friend of law and order and good government. The advantages of property are thus stated by Dr. Paley: "1. It increases the produce of the earth. The earth produces little without cultivation; and none would be found willing to cultivate the ground if others were to be admitted to an equal share of the produce. 2. It preserves the produce of the earth to maturity. 3. It prevents contests. War and waste, tumult and confusion, must be unavoidable and eternal where there is not enough for all, and where there are no rules to adjust the division. 4. It improves the conveniency of living. This it does in two ways. It enables mankind to divide themselves into distinct professions; and it likewise encourages those arts by which the accommodations of human life are supplied, by appropriating to the artist the benefit of his discoveries and improvements; without which appropriation ingenuity will never be exerted with effect."\* It has been maintained, however, that the right to hold property is a

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\* Paley's Theology.

concession to human selfishness, and was introduced by violence or cupidity under the artificial systems of government belonging to degenerate times. The chief instances usually adduced as proofs are, "the common hunting tribes of the North American Indians; Cæsar's mention that private and separate property in the soil was unknown to the Germans; the fact that the patriarchs had no fixed habitations, roaming with their herds wherever they listed; and that the Jewish government recognized to a certain extent a community of property, as seen in the edicts connected with the year of Jubilee." And yet when these cases are properly sifted, there is nothing in them. As it has been rightly observed, so long as a hunting ground was valuable the tribe in possession of it excluded all others from it. The pasture grounds occupied by the patriarchs were forbidden to any stranger leading his herds thither, while everything which had individual value in their eyes, their camels, horses, cattle, their tents and arms, they possessed separately. The Germans, while they cared little for the land in itself, yet claimed the growing crop as the reward of their labors. The Jewish scheme of government was not only peculiar but unique, and whatever relations they sustained to Jehovah as land owners, do not obtain with us any more than numberless other principles of the Mosaic code which are wholly inapplicable to our state of things. It is true that some of the early theologians thought that the view of an original common property was supported by passages in the New Testament, in which it is related that the first Christians "possessed all things in common." But as it has been justly remarked: "If the Bible seems to support the theory of original common property or of its general preferableness in some passages, we ought not to forget others which indicate the contrary. Of the six commandments which, to distinguish them from the others of a more strictly religious character, may be called ethical, two relate to the sacredness of private property. We should not even *covet* our neighbor's property; and the code of Moses curses him that removes the landmark."\* The Bible rather encourages the possession of individual property. It teaches that the laws of God's providence reward industry, skill, uprightness, with temporal prosperity. It nowhere condemns men for being rich, but only for the improper use of riches. Sometimes the argument against holding property is based upon the idea that its pursuit and its possession

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\* Liber, on Property and Labor.

are detrimental to the Christian character. The occupations of men are branded as radically faulty and vicious, as in themselves earthly and worldly. A distinction is sought to be drawn between things sacred and secular, and of course to the manifest disadvantage of the latter. But this very distinction is immoral and mischievous. It is divorcing religion from common life, and teaching men that it is impossible to conduct their business according to the laws of Jesus Christ. Man is a being of two worlds, of the seen and unseen, and the duties pertaining to each are both from God. If it is his duty to love the Lord his God with all his heart and mind and strength, it is equally his duty to provide for his own and be ready to help his neighbor. To provide things honest in the sight of all men, lifts human toil from its drudgery and gilds it with the light of heaven. Labor has undoubtedly its place in the economy of God's providence for the supply of human wants. It may not be the highest form of religious service, but still it is an office in a divine order. Nay, we go further, and assert that our very employments in our daily common life, are part of the divine economy to further the soul's weightiest interests, and develop a true, genuine Christian character. It is not by separating ourselves from the stirring interests and pursuits of life that we are best disciplined for usefulness and happiness. We are only rightly developed amid hardships to be endured and conflicts to be met. There can be no better field in which to show the power and grace of God, than amidst the busiest stir of secular pursuits. To be spiritually minded amid toils and difficulties is a nobler achievement than to be spiritually minded amid solitude and repose. Such being the case, why should a man be forbidden to mingle in the business of active and intelligent life, to be industrious in every proper and lawful calling, and to reap the fruits of his individual enterprise and skill? Surely a man may be a man of faith, of prayer and of God, who seeks through the lawful pursuits of daily life not only to supply his own immediate wants, but also to place himself beyond the wants of the hour, and become an instrument in God's hands to be a benefactor to others. This is certainly God's plan; a plan that is a stimulus to industry; a plan that awakens responsibility; a plan that calls forth individual endowments; a plan that accords with man's sense of right; a plan which the universal experience of mankind in all ages has proven the wisest and best, and most effective in its general results. To have a community

of goods would require that men should be constituted differently; that there should be no difference of body, of mind, or of temperament; otherwise the idle and the wasteful and the improvident would be a drag upon the enterprising and industrious, and soon reduce the whole race to starvation.

#### ON THE LAWFULNESS OF THE OATH, WHEN REQUIRED BY THE MAGISTRATE.

An oath is defined to be "the calling upon God to witness, *i. e.*, to take notice of what we say, and invoking his vengeance, or renouncing his favor, if what we say be false, or what we promise be not performed." Says another, "It is a religious assertion, or asseveration, wherein a person invokes the Almighty, renounces all claim to His mercy, or even calls for the divine vengeance upon himself if he speaks falsely."\* According to another authority, it is defined as follows: "Oath; Saxon, *coth*,—Lat. *paramentum*—an affirmation or denial of anything before one or more persons, who have authority to administer the same, for the discovery and advancement of truth and right: calling God to witness that the testimony is true."† "An oath is an appeal to some superior being, calling upon him to bear witness that the swearer speaks the truth, or intends to perform the promise which he makes."‡ Still another definition is as follows: "A lawful oath is an act of religious worship, appointed by God, as a means of promoting truth and confidence, in which act of worship the presence of God is solemnly recognized, his omniscience, justice and supreme authority are acknowledged; and in which the juror enters into a special covenant with God and with society to speak or act truthfully—calling upon God to witness what he affirms or promises, and to inflict the temporal and eternal penalties of perjury if the truth be not spoken."§ The forms of oaths have in all ages been various. Amongst the Jews it was the custom to hold up the right hand towards heaven. This undoubtedly was the most ancient form. Abraham is said to have told the king of Sodom, "I have lifted up my hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, that I will not take anything that is thine," *i. e.*, I have *sworn* by the Lord the Most High God. And this form of the oath seems also most appropriate. The lifting

\* Reese's Ency., art. Oath.

† Smith's Dic. Gr. and Rom. Ant.

‡ Law Dictionary by Jacobs.

§ Junkin on the Oath.



up of the hand towards heaven is a direct appeal to that dread tribunal where the secrets of all hearts at last shall be revealed. Even the Divine Being is represented as saying, "I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever," Deut. xxxii. 40. The heavenly messenger whom Daniel saw in vision (Dan. xii. 7), "held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by Him that liveth forever." The angel of the Apocalypse (Rev. x. 5, 6), "lifted up his hand to Heaven and swore by *Him* that liveth forever and ever." Amongst the Greeks and Romans the form varied with the subject and occasion of the oath. Sometimes the contracting parties took hold of each other's hand and swore to the performance of what they had promised; at other times they touched the altar of the god, by whose divinity they swore. "Anciently," says a learned Greek archæologist, "the person who took an oath *stood up*, and lifted his hands to heaven, as in prayer; for an oath was a species of prayer, and required the same ceremony."\* In many Christian countries, the most common form of the oath is that of holding the hand upon the Bible, or the Gospels, whilst taking the oath, and afterwards kissing the volume. In our own country, all persons are permitted to affirm, upon expressing their preference for this substitute of oath. Whatever the form may be, the *obligations* of an oath are not affected by it, nor do they depend upon it. "When a man *consents* to testify before a lawful tribunal, no matter in what *form* his consent is expressed, he *ipso facto* places himself in the position of one under oath; and so is held in the view of God and society. The truth of this position is recognized in all our laws against perjury, in which a violation of truth, by a witness under *affirmation*, is held to be perjury, as fully as if the oath had been administered in due form."† Dissatisfaction with the law and practice of judicial oaths is a thing of long standing in the world. The class of persons who believe the taking of an oath to be forbidden by their duty towards God, is a class of by no means recent origin. It is spread over twenty-five centuries of history. "Greek philosophers have expressed their dissatisfaction with Hebrew Rabbis and Church fathers, Jewish Essenes with Christian Quakers, religious mystics and enthusiasts with disciples of the philosophy of Utility." In the early Christian Church there was a diversity of opinion upon the subject. This opinion appears to have been divided between the abso-

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\* Smith's Dic. Gr. and Rom. Antiq.

† Junkin on the Oath.

lute refusal of oaths and a strong dislike to them. The refusal and the dislike were based upon such precepts as "Swear not at all," and "Above all things, my brethren, swear not." In later times, the more thorough-going and radical sects, have for the most part revived this article of the primitive Christian morality. The objection to oaths, therefore, is not a thing of recent origin. As an intellectual conviction, a moral feeling or a religious scruple, it has existed under very various forms, in times and countries far remote from each other, and in connection with the widest possible diversities of opinion in other matters. And yet, notwithstanding all this, the great mass of mankind in all ages have deemed oaths to be right and lawful. The testimony of the great body of the Christian Church has been in favor of their use. As an element of social government, the oath has been employed since the first organization of society among men. Long experience has confirmed its value in all lands. We do not hesitate therefore to assert, that oaths are both lawful and Scriptural. They are lawful, because by compelling a man to testify *truly*, the ends of justice are promoted and the public safety secured. They are lawful, because by the solemn sanctions they impose, *confidence* is established between man and man, putting thereby an end to strife and increasing social comfort. They are lawful, because their existence in every age, and in different countries, proves that they must have sprung from a *common origin*, and this origin one that God had given, for the proper government of the race. They are lawful, moreover, because they are Scriptural. They are proven to be Scriptural, because they are commanded of God. Nowhere is the oath forbidden in God's Word, but frequently it is enjoined. A few texts will suffice to prove this assertion. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve Him, and *shalt swear by His name*," Deut. vi. 13. In Deut x. 20, the same injunction is repeated: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, Him shalt thou serve, and to Him shalt thou cleave, and *swear by His name*." And when we take in conjunction with these passages, the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain," what other interpretation can be given to them, but the use of the name of God in the oath, sincerely and reverently? In Is. lxxv. 16 we read, "That he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth: and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God

of truth." And in Jer. iv. 2, "And thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, and the *nations* shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him shall they glory." Upon this passage Scott remarks, "The constant mention of swearing, as an act and part of true religious worship, which in some cases is expressly commanded, constitutes a full proof, that they who understand certain passages in the New Testament, as indiscriminately prohibiting all oaths, lie under a mistake: for God could never have *commanded* that which is evil in its nature, as all oaths, by such an interpretation, are supposed to be." They are also proven to be Scriptural, by the Divine example. When God made a covenant with Abraham. He said, "By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah," Gen. xxii. 16. This transaction is often referred to in Scripture as the *oath of God*. In Heb. vi. 13 and 17, the apostle declares that, "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself:" and that the reason for his so doing was, that "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by *an oath*." This quotation has been objected to on the ground "that what the Almighty may do in the exercise of his sovereign authority, is not *therefore* right for us. It would not follow that, because *He* may have sworn by *Himself*, we may also swear by him."\* In other words, the objection is, that the Supreme Lawgiver, who is above all law, may do that which the *subject* of law may not do. And yet "Jesus \* \* who was in the *form of a servant*, and was made in the likeness of *men* \* \* and became *obedient* unto death"—has set us the example of submission to the oath lawfully administered. When the High Priest said, "*I adjure thee by the living God* that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ the Son of God: Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said." This was an affirmative reply to an oath, to which Jesus made no objection. Surely, without any further argument, it must be admitted that the ordinance of the oath is approved by *divine example*. They are proven to be Scriptural, finally, by what is recorded of individuals. It is recorded of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Moses, of David and of Nehemiah, that they did not scruple either to take an oath themselves or to administer the ordinance to others. And these records contain not a word of censure, as to the use of the oath by them, but rather convey the im-

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\* Lewis' Treatise on Oaths.

pression that it met with the Divine approval. So in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul frequently uses expressions in the nature of oaths. "God is my witness:" "I call God for a record on my soul." For these and other reasons we believe not only that it is right to take an oath upon just occasions, but that its refusal is sinful, when lawfully called to the duty. The objection to oaths founded upon Matt. v. 34, "I say unto you, swear not at all," and upon James v. 12, "But above all things, my brethren, swear not" etc., we think has been satisfactorily answered by the generally received opinion, that these words relate not to judicial oaths, but to the practice of vain, wanton and unauthorized swearing in common discourse.

It is to be regretted, however, that the administration of oaths has been employed to such an unlimited extent. Religious sanctions and the name of the Deity should not be forced into all the details of life, and mixed up with its most trivial concerns. The temptation to irreverence by such a course is very great. A too frequent application of strong excitements is as deadening to the moral as it is to the physical sense. Indifference to the obligations of religion will naturally follow from an ill-regulated and prodigal appeal to them.

#### ON MARRIAGE.

On the subject of marriage the Confessors are bold and outspoken. In Article XXIII., of Abuses Corrected, they use the following language: "Marriage was appointed of God to prevent licentiousness; as Paul says (1 Cor. vii. 2), 'To avoid fornication let every man have his own wife.' Again, 'It is better to marry than to burn' (Cor. vii. 9,) and according to the declaration of Christ that not all men can receive this word (Matt. xix. 12). In this passage Christ himself, who well knew what was in man, declared that few persons are qualified to live in celibacy; for God created us male and female (Gen. i. 27). And experience has abundantly proved how vain is the attempt to alter the nature or meliorate the character of God's creatures by mere human purposes or vows, without a peculiar gift or grace of God. It is notorious that the effort has been prejudicial to purity of morals; and in how many cases it has occasioned distress of mind and the most terrific apprehensions of conscience, is known by the confessions of numerous individuals." And again, "If therefore it is evident from the divine word and

command that matrimony is lawful in ministers and ecclesiastics, and history teaches that their practice formerly was conformed to this precept; if it is evident that the vow of celibacy has been productive of the most scandalous and unchristian conduct, of adultery, unheard-of licentiousness, and other abominable crimes prevalent among the clergy, as some of the dignitaries at Rome have themselves often confessed and lamented; it is a lamentable thing that the Christian estate of matrimony has not only been forbidden, but in some places speedy punishment been presumptuously inflicted, as though it were a heinous crime. \* \* \* \* The apostle Paul denominates that a doctrine of devils which forbids marriage. And Christ says, "The devil is a murderer from the beginning." For that may well be regarded as a doctrine of devils which forbids marriage and enforces the prohibition by the shedding of blood. In Article XXVII., on Monastic Vows, they say: "In the first place we teach that all who do not feel inclined to a life of celibacy have the power and right to marry. Their vows to the contrary cannot annul the command of God: 'Nevertheless to avoid fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.' To this course we are urged and compelled both by the divine precepts and the general nature of man, agreeably to the declaration of God himself: 'It is not good for man to be alone, I will make an help-meet for him.'" And again: 'But the common people are led into many injurious opinions by the false commendation of monastic life. When they hear a life of celibacy applauded without measure, it follows that their conscience is oppressed in their married state; for when the common people hear that the mendicants alone are to be regarded as perfect, they can not feel assured that they are not guilty of sin, in holding worldly possessions and pursuing a worldly calling. \* \* And we read of many examples of persons who have forsaken their wives and children, and also the duties of civil government, and confined themselves in monasteries. They regarded this as fleeing from the world and seeking such a life as is more pleasing to God than any other. They could not understand that it is our duty to serve God according to those commands which he has given, and not those invented by men. But that is certainly a good and perfect state of life which is sanctioned by the law of God, whilst that is a dangerous condition or mode of life which is unauthorized by the divine law." These



are brave and true words, and considering the circumstances under which they were spoken, as brave and true words as ever were uttered. The lawfulness cannot be denied. It is founded in reason, and sanctioned by the word of God. Abolish this relation and what would be the result? The purposes of human society would be defeated; virtue would be disregarded, and man would live under the lawless control of his wild and wanton passions. The sweet influences of home would never be realized, and the education of each successive generation under the eye of parental love and watchfulness would be a thing unknown. Religion, patriotism, the purity of social life and the perfection of human society, all have their roots in the marriage institution. Marriage is the fundamental source and law of the family, and out of the family comes society, and out of society government, and out of government law and order and love of country and religion. It is consequently the deepest fountain of power, the strongest and most pervading influence in society. It is the richest field for human culture, for the education of men in all that is best and noblest for this world and the world to come. 'Tis true, that there have been unhappy marriages and disordered and ill-regulated families; but for these the marriage relationship is no more to be blamed than religion is for the evils that have been perpetrated in its name. Its tendency is to lift up and not to cast down, to elevate and not to degrade, to bind together and not to separate; and where these blessed objects are not attained, it is not the fault of marriage, but of that strange perversity in our natures which abuses the best of gifts and turns life itself into death. To realize the true ideal of marriage we must look in upon a home where two souls, needing each other and drawn to each other, enter into a sacred covenant to share together the duties and joys and cares of life. Diverse in character and diverse in attributes, they compose together the perfect nature, and live together the perfect life. Acting and reacting upon each other, they develop by their contrasts and differences each other's being. Under the influence of the wife the ruggedness of the man is softened, and he is stimulated to deeds of virtue and noble daring; under the influence of the man, the character of the wife is strengthened and her many excellencies developed. Each is a stimulus to the other—a stimulus to noble and fruitful living, such as constant contact cannot choose but give. "Mutual forbearance, mutual comfort, mutual strength, mutual guidance, mu-

tual trust; common principles, common duties, common burdens, common aims, common hopes, common joys—here are the materials of life's truest, noblest discipline; here the metal of character is welded and molded into forms of finished strength and beauty, meet for the Master's work and joy in the great assembly and church of the first-born in heaven."\* Then can we conceive of a finer field of usefulness than that which springs from the fruit and outgrowth of marriage? Do not the plastic influences of home outweigh all other influences in moulding the spirit and laying the foundations of character? Shut up within the charmed circle of this quiet life, where love should sway the sceptre and kindness rule the hours, surely nothing but courage and patience and constancy and intelligence and faith and hope and religion are needed upon the part of parents to make home the grandest and sweetest and most fruitful scene on the footstool of Jehovah. In that wonderful picture of the German nature and institutions which Tacitus painted as a bitter rebuke to the youth of degenerate Rome, the central point on which the whole interest turns is the fact that the home institution was prized by the German—that he held his house as his sanctuary, literally sacred to him, as a shrine to its God. It is perhaps this reverence for woman and for the sanctity of homes, which characterized their life even in its rudest stages, which justifies the dictum of Hegel that "the destiny of the German people was to be the bearers of the Christian principles." Marriage then is undoubtedly a divine institution, founded not only in reason, but expressly sanctioned by the Scriptures. "From the beginning of creation," says Jesus, "God made them male and female." That is, there was that in the constitution which he gave them, in the relation they sustained to each other, which made it proper to say that God had joined them together. The Scriptures brand with infamy the doctrine that forbids to marry. They often employ the connection as the image of the union subsisting between Christ and the Church. They assure us that marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. It is alleged, however, that celibacy in itself is holier than marriage. This is the principle laid down by the Romish Church, as well as some other errorists. Is this principle a correct one? We deem it utterly incapable of proof, for the simple reason that no just comparison can be made between the

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\* I. Baldwin Brown.

relative merit of the two states in life. Marriage is undoubtedly the normal state of man. It is the design of God that the race should be continued, and this can only be done through the marriage relation. Celibacy is an abnormal condition, seeing it would lead to the extinction of the race, and thus must be contrary to the will of God. Can then this abnormal condition, which is counteracting the designs of an infinitely wise God, be purer than the normal condition which is seeking to fulfill his will. "The barren fig tree, then," says an ancient controversialist, "was purer than had it been loaded with fruits." Besides, the advocates of celibacy have never been so unguarded as to say that it saves infallibly and of itself; no more have they said that in the married state salvation is impossible. Wherein then can a comparison be instituted between them in point of intrinsic merit? The only question that can reasonably be started is, "Which contributes most to salvation?" Bungener, in his "History of the Council of Trent," says in substance: "The matter in hand is not to know which of the two states is the most *holy*, but which is best fitted to make people holy. Now in these terms any general and systematic answer is impossible. Such a one will find salvation in celibacy, without any marring of his comfort and happiness; another will find nothing in it but ennui, disgust, temptations, evil thoughts of every kind. One will grow better and better in it, thanks to the salutary pressure of his new duties; another will see in it only a yoke, and those same duties will have proved but the occasions of new faults. Therefore, we repeat, the question is one of facts, not of principles. Such an one may have been lost in celibacy who might have been saved in marriage. It is impossible to say, *a priori*, which of the states is the better of the two in respect of its effects, as to prove by serious reasons the intrinsic superiority of the one over the other."

#### THE RIGHT OF REVOLUTION.

One other item claims our consideration. It is found in the concluding part of this Article. The Confessors having declared that true religion does not consist, as some had taught, in the abandonment of all civil duties, but in the fear of God and in faith; because the Gospel teaches the necessity of ceaseless righteousness of heart, whilst it does not abolish the duties of civil domestic life, but specially requires them to be observed as ordinances of God, and

performed in the spirit of Christian love," add: "Hence Christians ought necessarily to yield obedience to their civil officers and laws: unless when they command something sinful; for then they ought to obey God rather than man." As Government is a divine institution, the Scriptures in their general tenor as well as in many particular passages teach a due obedience to every properly constituted authority, which society may require for the protection of its own interests. No society whatever can exist, without a due subordination of its members, and subordination implies a supreme authority, which in one country exists in one form, in another country in another. Whoever resists this supreme authority is an enemy to good order and the welfare of society, and, as such, is guilty of a crime the most reprehensible in its nature. But this doctrine of submission to legitimate government cannot consistently with common sense be extended to all the abuses of which government is capable. For this is not only the destruction of every good, but the certain introduction of the worst evils that can be conceived. It is therefore contradictory to St. Paul's idea of a magistrate, who calls him "the minister of God for good," but if he thus becomes the minister of evil he is no longer the minister of God, and may with safe conscience be resisted to the utmost. If submission to all abuses may be defended from the doctrine of submission to government, we may by parity of reason defend even the pagan idolatry, because the Scriptures enjoin religious worship as a duty. It is true that law, in the proper sense of the word, is entitled to absolute obedience; but then this law must be consistent with the ordinances of God and the rights of man. It must be fundamentally holy, just and good. In the institution of Providence law itself has its proper boundaries. God has given no human power the authority to make any law which deprives his creatures of those rights and privileges which he has conferred upon them. And when such a law is established either by violence, by artifice, or by corruption, it has in reality no justifiable, though in mere form it may have a legal obedience. Opposition to it is founded in the very instincts of our nature, and is supported by the institutions of God. Hence, in the language of the framers of the Declaration of Independence, it does sometimes "in the course of human events become necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another," for "they hold these truths to be

self-evident: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute a new government," etc. This resistance, however, is to be understood as applicable only to laws which are real and manifest oppressions, and are not reconcilable with the laws of God or the rights of man; but it is not meant as a justification for those wild and insurrectionary movements, which, under pretence of grievances, oppose salutary laws, and from motives of discontent and faction are the disturbance and disgrace of civilized society. Neither does the right of resistance apply to every unimportant transgression beyond the bounds of legal prerogative. The peace of society is not to be disturbed by such causes. Obedience is due till tyranny begins to trample upon the dearest rights of man and overturns the fundamental principles of government.

In reply to the question, "May a legal government be resisted in unlawful demands, and may a people take up arms against a whole government previously considered lawful?" Lieber, in his *Manual of Political Ethics*, says: "When this question has been discussed without peculiar reference to practical cases of deep interest at the time, the greater number of jurists and philosophers have allowed that there are cases in which it is lawful and necessary to resist with arms, that is, to resort to insurrection. \* \* As to the principle there can be no doubt whatever. Every unlawful government ought to be resisted, and permanently changed, if it permanently and obstinately insists upon a course injurious to the people, and if the evils accompanying the change are not greater than the blessings to be obtained by the change. In the abstract we might easily go farther: we might say, Government ought to be resisted, whenever it acts unlawfully. But the unavoidable difficulty arises of deciding when it acts unlawfully, for the people may be mistaken as well as the government. Our forefathers enacted in many cases that if the ruler distressed the people against the law, it was lawful to resist him. \* \* The government is an organism for the purpose of obtaining the great ends of the state, the state an institution



to secure the great social and individual ends of humanity, and if the former ceases to obtain its object either from want of energy, or because it endeavors systematically and continuedly to undermine and destroy those ends, society has no doubt the simple right of establishing a new one, even where there is no particular compact between the rulers and the ruled. The government is no longer a lawful one, though established according to all the formalities of the law, because no longer answering the purpose or obtaining the ends and objects of the law. Mankind have always acted upon this principle. Yet so necessary is a government; so unrighteous is it not to deliberate in all matters relating to society whether we may not injure others more than we assist them; so doubtful, calamitous, and frequently demoralizing are the effects of insurrection and of civil war; so easily is the individual deceived respecting his own rights and the probable success of measures which may appear suitable to the temperament of our mind at the time; so much increased is the evil of tyranny in case of unsuccessful attempt at resistance; and so frequently does resistance, even though successful against the government, lead to tyranny worse than the previous one, to military government; and so often does it open an arena for the worst passions and shallow mediocrity, noisy, forward, and unconcerned about the harm it produces; that he who resorts to force against the existing government, indeed, commits treason against society."

Whatever difficulties are connected with this subject of resistance, there can be no doubt as to our duty, when human authority seeks to set aside the plain commands of God. No human institution, though ordained of God, can over-rule the higher authority under which it acts. We are commanded to obey God rather than man, Acts iv. 19; v. 29. Imperfection clings to every human government. Their rulers are not divine, even though government is a divine institution. Consequently human laws cannot be placed on a level with God's laws. In any conflict of authority between them, the lesser must yield to the greater. And especially is this true when human governments improperly undertake to regulate the kingdom of Christ, thus moving out of their own province and entering one that has laws and methods peculiar to itself. In concluding this discipline we cannot but express our admiration at the attitude of the Confessors on Civil Affairs. As Dr. Schmucker in his popular Theology, has justly remarked, "it is certainly com-

mendable, that living under a government so defective, the Confessors should have uttered not a word inconsistent with the purest principles of republicanism; nay, that they even asserted to the face of the Emperor, their right to resist such laws as they deemed sinful." Their views were broad and statesmanlike, because they were founded upon the word of God. They spoke as men who had no favors to ask, and no fears to cloud their views. Honesty of purpose, sincerity of conviction, and solemn responsibility, breathe through all their utterances. Their eye being single, their whole body was full of light. Pure in heart they saw God. In his light, they saw light. To cherish their memory is a sacred duty; to walk in their footsteps, a noble ambition; and to be guided by their sentiments is to be saved from error, and grounded in the truth of God.

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## ARTICLE XVII.

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# CHRIST'S RETURN TO JUDGMENT.

BY E. J. WOLF, D. D.

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ARTICLE XVII. of the Augsburg Confession reads, according to the Latin Text:

"They also teach that at the consummation of the world Christ will appear for judgment and raise all the dead, bestow upon the pious and elect eternal life and everlasting joy, but condemn wicked men and devils to be forever tormented.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who teach that the punishment of damned men and devils will have an end. They condemn also others who are now disseminating the Judaizing notions that anterior to the resurrection of the dead the righteous will possess the government of the world, the wicked being everywhere destroyed. (Ger. Text: "Certain Jewish notions which are even now mooted that \* \* the holy and pious shall alone possess a secular kingdom and shall exterminate all the ungodly.")

The XV. Marburg Articles, which constitute the original draught of which the Augustana is the ultimate development, do not contain this Article, nor any allusion to the *Novissima*. It is found, however, in the second outline of the formulated doctrine, the XVII Articles of Schwabach, although in a form varying somewhat from that here given, and with the order of the related Articles transposed.

The thirteenth of the Schwabach Articles declares "that our Lord Jesus will come at the last day to judge the quick and the dead, and to deliver his believing ones from all evil and bring them into ever-

lasting life. The unbelieving and ungodly he will punish and with the devils condemn them forever to hell."

This Article is there immediately preceded by that concerning THE CHURCH: "There will always be upon earth a holy Christian Church until the end of the world, which Church is no other than the body of believers in Christ," etc., and is followed by the Article concerning CIVIL GOVERNMENT: "That in the meanwhile, until the Lord shall come to judgment and abolish all power and dominion, we are to honor and obey all civil government and rule, as an estate ordained of God," etc.

The import of this sequence as given by Luther, in the Schwabach Articles, is evident and striking. In Art. XII. it is maintained that there will always be a holy Church upon the earth, a Church that must endure suffering and persecution in the world; yet in view of the fact that this Church, even in and by means of its struggles and afflictions, is steadily advancing toward a triumphant goal, the Parousia of her Lord and the completion of his kingdom, it devolves upon Christians to take comfort, and in the meanwhile, until this glorious deliverance and the supersedure of all worldly reign and authority by the visible reign of him whose right it is to rule, to submit themselves loyally and reverently to the worldly powers under which they are placed. It is not their province as Christians to revolutionize civil governments. They are ordained of God for the time being. Yet it does behoove them at all times to discriminate between the rule of these and the reign of Christ. The internal connection in the Confession is therefore virtually the same, even in the reversed order of the Articles.\* From the present confusion, the deep distress and the fiery tribulations which the Church is constantly experiencing, the Confessors lift their eyes to the future, and declare their conviction that her ultimate consummation is yet to be achieved. The Church does not despair. Her conflicts must eventually terminate in her triumph, and not in her overthrow. Her feet, bruised and bleeding from the fangs of the serpent, will yet crush the very head of that serpent, and the kingdoms that have so long humbled and oppressed the subjects of the true King, will yet themselves become the empire of Immanuel. Inspired and sustained by this unfaltering hope, the Church keeps up the contest. She is persuaded that the flaming light of that day

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\* Plitt's Einleitung.

of days, when her Lord shall come in power and great glory, will reveal the ruin of her foes and her own enthronement with Christ. Now her life is hid with Christ in God. Like her Lord, she is pierced, dishonored, crucified. But when he who is her life will appear, then she will also appear with him in glory, conformed to him in spirit, and partaker of his overwhelming triumph.\* The day of his revelation from heaven will also witness the manifestation of the sons of God.† This she knows, and this is what she confesses.

The surprising brevity of the Confession is well illustrated in this Article. The whole domain of Eschatology is in its thetical statements couched in half a dozen lines, the Confessors aiming, as is well known, at the enumeration of only such points as were deemed necessary for the defence of their position, to wit, that they had adopted nothing, either in regard to doctrine or ceremonies, that is opposed to the Holy Scriptures or to the Christian Church Universal.‡

The true scope of a Confession they well understood to be the definition and defense of those truths which are essential to the faith of the Church, and which are at once the experience and the expression of her living consciousness. In this Article they knew themselves to be in such entire accord with the historic Church that their language is little more than a literal repetition of the Œcumenical Creeds, restricted like them to the plainest declarations of the Scriptures.

The reformers were also aware, that in this matter there was entire harmony between them and their antagonists both on the right and on the left, for the Zwinglians were perfectly satisfied with this presentation of eschatological doctrines and the Romanists offered no objection to it in their Confutation.

"All were agreed in this, that the history of the Church, therefore also that of the world, will terminate with the coming of Christ for the final judgment; that, moreover, all the dead will appear in risen form, and that the judgment will effect a final and eternal separation between the blessed followers of Christ and his condemned foes."||

The position of the Confessors in this Article falls under three heads:

\* Col. iii. 4.

† Rom. viii. 19.

‡ Epilogus, Sym. Bücher, Müller's Edition, p. 69.

|| Plitt's Einleitung.



I. WHAT THEY CONFESS.

II. WHAT THEY CONDEMN.

III. WHAT THEY COMMIT TO FREEDOM AND FURTHER ELUCIDATION.

I. WHAT THEY CONFESS.

Under the doctrines confessed we have

1. *The Advent of the Lord*, ἡ παρουσία. This is the first event to succeed the present order of things, the condition and cause of the other events named in this Article, their signal as well as their centre.

The Lord is now absent from his beloved bride. The Church presents the anomaly of a kingdom whose Sovereign has for the time disappeared. This merely spiritual relationship cannot, in the nature of the case, be the normal or the final state of his kingdom. It is a state to which his people can never be reconciled, and in regard to which they are evermore praying that it may speedily terminate. He who has personally founded the kingdom, who has given for it his own blood, who has never surrendered his immediate headship over it, can surely not have purposed to remain forever removed from it—as far as the heavens are above the earth. A glorious consummation in this world must await this kingdom. The absence of the King is designedly in its interests, and if while continuing in the closest spiritual relation to it he has ascended to infinite dignity and power only the better to promote its extension and assure its triumph, then most certainly he will come again into his own realm, with the display of his real majesty. Surely the same earth which witnessed his humiliation for the sake of the Church, shall also behold his glorification at the head of the Church triumphant. The world which he redeemed must be the theatre of his ultimate victorious manifestation. Both Christology and Soteriology demand the return of the Lord in glory as the necessary and supreme completion of his office and the proper apocalypse of his person.

Such a hope, therefore, reason itself inevitably awakens and encourages. In the words of Nitzsch: "Speculation has so little to object to the Christian conception of the world catastrophe, that, if there were no eschatological doctrine, it must supply this lack." "History, and even experience, give every reason to doubt whether without such personal appearing and intervention of the king himself in the course of things, the kingdom of God could indeed ever

arrive at the complete development and triumph to which it is designed it should come. It is with this doctrine as with that of the Creation and Beginning of all things,—in its ultimate character equally incomprehensible, but also equally indispensable."\* The personal advent of the Lord is thus the logical close, *συντέλεια*, of all that has or shall have preceded it, the magnificent dome of God's temple, the grand finale of history. This, and this only, will give to the economy of redemption an issue corresponding with its eternal aim and purpose, a consummation crowning its long process.

For this expectation the Church has the fullest warrant. If the language of Revelation is ever explicit, emphatic and reiterate, it is on the promise of his coming. If reason itself suggests this sequel to the present dispensation, inspiration guarantees it as an immutable certainty.

Even before the disciples distinctly understood the purpose of Christ's first coming, they received one lesson after another upon the second Advent. When the Master in his tender farewell discourse communicates to them the staggering news of his withdrawal from them, he at the same time consoles their breaking hearts with the prospect of his final return. His going away, he assures them, is but the condition of his coming again. He describes to them great commotions and terrible revolutions and judgments that are to overtake the world, more especially the Jewish nation, and through these as a glass points them to the still more awful catastrophe that shall shake the powers of heaven and earth and at the same time signalize the personal, visible, Parousia of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of his Father, attended by his holy messengers. He represents himself as a nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return. He nerves them for self-denial and endurance with the prospect of an ample recompense when he shall come to render to every man according to his works.

His apostles subsequently take up the theme. They thrill their audiences with the same joyful truth. In the very first passage of history outside of the Gospels the sacred writer reports the testimony of the angels that this same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.† And from that time this strain runs through all the apostolical writings. There is perhaps no other doctrine on which their testimony is so united, so promi-

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\* Van Oosterzee.

† Acts i. 11.

ment so pronounced.\* It forms the underlying basis of all the exhortations and consolations of the New Testament. It serves as the never-failing solution of the peculiar tribulations and the mysterious circumstances which Christians were called upon to encounter, and it becomes the summit of all their aspirations and endeavors. Nor can it be without supreme significance that the canon which ever resounds with this hope should close with the antiphonal shouts, "Surely I come quickly, Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

Not all the numerous passages that speak of Christ's return can indeed be understood in the same sense. They have reference now to an event more realistic, now to a fact more spiritual; at one time they point to an occurrence close at hand, then to one more remote; here to his constant coming, there to his ultimate coming once for all. The first generation of Christians were not to taste of death until they would see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.† This coming is certainly not to be confounded with that eventual day of the Lord in which the heavens shall pass away, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.‡ The failure to make this distinction evidently created some errors and confusion in the early Church, and gave rise to scoffing taunts.

Yet whatever difference obtains in the peculiar import of the respective utterances on the Lord's coming, the prospect of his final advent in glory never disappears. He comes in manifold ways and at sundry times, in special manifestations both of his saving and his judicial office. His incarnation, his outpouring of the Spirit, the overthrow of the Jewish nation, the conversion of the heathen, and other mighty interpositions that have advanced the progress of his kingdom and revealed the sway of his sceptre over all authorities in an ever-increasing measure—all these are instances of his coming, shining manifestations of his presence in the world; yet these are but the symbols, the prophecies, the germs of a still greater and brighter advent, the appropriate culmination of all previous comings. The true significance of the latter, in fact, lies in their reference to the ultimate Parousia, the "last, all-deciding, final manifestation, which constitutes not only the product, but also the end of the present development."

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\* Acts iii. 20; 1 John ii. 28; Rev. i. 7; 2 Thess. i. 10; Heb. ix. 28; James v. 8; Jude 14.

† Matt. xvi. 28.

‡ 2 Peter iii. 10.

Her first teachers having so implicitly impressed this doctrine on the faith of the Church, it passed over into her life, and has ever been one of the strongest and most marked characteristics of her spirit. The more healthy and vigorous her pulsations, the brighter burns this hope and the more steadily is she on the watch, "looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God." Nothing is dearer to her than "the promise of his coming." Nothing in her best life is she more intent upon than to discern the signs of his approach. Nothing in the deepest perplexity so cheers her as the hope that the Lord is at hand. The Israel of God under the New Dispensation, even as the ancient Israel, are distinguished as a people of desire, a people of the future. They rejoice not that they have attained, but that with the coming of the Lord they will attain. It is this hope that kindles and sustains the best exercises and brings forth the best fruits of the soul, and "history makes abundantly manifest, that where this prospect has temporarily receded in the Christian consciousness, the spiritual life has also declined."\*

It was especially while the Church was yet in the glow of her first love, and possessed of the firm faith that endured the ravages and terrors of the persecutions, as also when she sustained the sublime struggle of the Reformation, that this hope profoundly thrilled and powerfully supported the saints of the Most High.

In the earliest expression of her faith the Church affirmed it as the completion of the second Article, and from that day till now she is never done with the confession of her Lord until she has testified her conviction that he will come again to judge the quick and the dead. It has ever kindled her poetic fire, and in so eminent a degree inspired her song, that no great truth of Christianity has struck sublimer strains from the sacred lyre than the vision of the day of the Son of Man.

So too in the ecclesiastical year which the Church has instituted as the perennial expression of her Creed, she has set apart an extended portion in which to cherish and strengthen her advent hopes and prepare herself for the actual and ultimate advent season. Even in the celebration of the Lord's death, in the midst of the Holy Communion of his body and blood, she utters this truth in her constant rehearsal of the command to show the Lord's death until he come.

Of the mode of the Lord's coming we can in the nature of the

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\* Van Oosterzee.

case form no definite conception. All eschatological events are, in their details, necessarily shrouded and veiled from our present knowledge. The sphere in which they will take place is in some respects certainly different from that of our present life, giving them a unique character. Unlike the great doctrines of Theology and Soteriology, experience can here reflect no light upon what is left dark by Revelation, and the statements of the latter are such that with our present data we can merely spell out the substantial truth, without being able to interpret the concomitant details.

It will unmistakably be a personal coming. All the references to this event plainly assert or imply that fact. It is something different from his ordinary intervention for the rescue of his people or the judgment of his foes, those ever-recurring manifestations of his grace and power upon earth.

From these instances of his spiritual presence that coming is distinguished as an *επιφάνεια του κυρίου*, appearance of the Lord,\* *επιφάνεια της παρουσίας*, manifestation of his presence, † *επιφάνεια της δόξης*, appearance of the glory.‡ It is a *παρουσία του κυρίου*, an arrival, an advent of the Lord, a presence unlike what is now realized, an *επιφάνεια της παρουσίας*, the appearing of his presence, by which will be destroyed the wicked one.§ Now he is taken away from us, we walk not by sight but by faith. His glory is hidden from view, but we look for an *'αποκαλύψις 'Ιησού Χριστού*, a revelation of Jesus Christ.|| Now the Church in her humble lot is partaker of Christ's sufferings, but at the revelation of his glory we shall also rejoice with exceeding joy.¶ The manifestation of God in the flesh has indeed already taken place, but this only in humiliation and as the prelude of the complete revelation which the Church is awaiting, *απεκδεχομενος την αποκάλυψιν του κυρίου*,\*\* an apocalypse from heaven with the angels of his power.†† Correlative with this first manifestation in lowliness there is to be a second actual personal advent of Jesus Christ, distinguished by majesty, splendor, salvation, an advent which is explicitly designated as his "appearing the second time," *εκ δευτέρου* \* \* *'οφθίσεται*, ‡‡ a coming as real, personal and visible as the first, only under changed conditions and with another purpose, partaking more of the character of

\* 1 Tim. vi. 14.

† 2 Thess. ii. 8.

‡ Tit. ii. 13.

§ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

|| 1 Pet. i. 7.

¶ 1 Pet. iv. 13.

\*\* 1 Cor. i. 7.

†† 2 Thess. i. 7 cf. Col. iii. 4 *φανερωθῇ*.

‡‡ Heb. ix. 28.



his ascension than of his incarnation. "For this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." He shall come not as a babe in swaddling clothes, but a bright and glorious form; not in a manger, but in the clouds of heaven; not among the brutes, but with the holy angels and celestial powers in his suite. The declarations of Scripture do not admit of any other interpretation than that of a perceptible, real coming upon the earth. Whatever figures may be employed to envelop the event, and whatever difficulty there may be in the effort to combine all these external representations into one realistic scene, or to determine what passages are figurative and what literal, they indicate a resplendent revelation of the glorified divine-human person of Jesus, a disclosure of his personal exaltation to universal power. They describe his unveiling of himself to all eyes,\* his coming forth out of the invisible and super-cosmical state into that of visible, cosmical relations—as the lightning flashes forth from the darkness in which it lies concealed and shines all over the heavens, so shall be also the coming of the Son of man.†

The *consensus* of the older Lutheran dogmaticians represents throughout this interpretation of the Scriptures. Verbally repeating the inspired statements, they look for an "adventum visibilem, localum, verum, publicum, gloriosissimum, in corpore splendidissimo, ipsos solis radios luce sua exuberante."‡

Later theologians, Reinhard, Storr, *et. al.*, while regarding the descriptions of the New Testament as a pictorial setting, find yet in them the doctrine that Christ will come visibly, and render apparent to all the reality of his glorified state.

Objections cannot be opposed to this doctrine other than such as bear equally against special revelation, creation, divine providence, or the incarnation. The inherent possibility of the theanthropic glorified Redeemer manifesting himself in every place when and where he pleases, cannot be doubted by any who hold the Lutheran Christological premises. Its explanation is another matter—and is in fact not called for, belonging as it does to the sphere of the miraculous.

Assured as is this prospect of the Parousia, the time of its realization has not been revealed to man. It is hidden even from the

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\* Rev. i. 7.

† Matt. xxiv. 27; 2 Thess. i. 8.

‡ See especially Gerhard.

knowledge of the angels in heaven, yea from the Son himself,\* in his state of humiliation. The Bride is not to know the specific hour of her Lord's return. She is to keep herself always waiting, expectant, ready. This is her best and her worthiest frame, and to this state of mind the uncertainty of her blessed hour very materially contributes.

While language was often employed which made the impression that the Parousia would take place very soon, the possibility of delay was also clearly indicated.† The uncertainty was strongly emphasized and the practical caution always given to be ready, inasmuch as it would unexpectedly break in upon the world, unlooked for like a thief in the night, suddenly as the flash of a thunderbolt, swiftly overtaking God's enemies presuming upon peace and safety.

The very passages which bring out the suddenness and the surprise which will characterize the advent, aid furthermore in establishing the conclusion that it will be a distinct act, an act complete in itself, happening once for all at a specific point of time, and in no sense a process or a course of progressive manifestation. How long the day of his coming may continue, what immense ages may be embraced in that eventful day into which all other days and periods are flowing, has not been revealed, but the Parousia itself will be the act of a moment. It will be instantaneous.

Although all efforts to compute the precise date of the Lord's coming must be viewed as a profane endeavor to pry into those secret things which belong unto God, nevertheless some considerations respecting the signs that shall usher it in, are not to be lost sight of.

a. The Scriptures very plainly intimate that the event will be immediately preceded by premonitory portentous phenomena—by a period of distress and tribulation surpassing all the woes our world has ever experienced,‡ the powers of nature suffering great convulsions and mighty changes, men's hearts failing them for fear.§

Thus, while the wicked, sitting in their own security, blinded with unbelief, dreaming of peace, will be surprised with sudden destruction, there is no occasion for the enlightened, believing, ever-watchful saints, being so overtaken. It is their duty as well as their privilege to discern the signs of the times, and at the appearance of certain signals to lift up their heads, assured that their redemption

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\* Mark xiii. 32.

† Matt. xxiv. 6, 48, xxv. 19 : 2 Thess. ii. 2.

‡ Matt. xxiv. 21.

§ Luke xxi.

is near, the night is far spent, the morning dawns, he is nigh even at the door.\*

To those therefore who have believed the prophets and whose hopeful eyes have watched the sky, their Lord's return is not unexpected as it is to those who have scoffed at the promise of his coming and imagined that all things still continue as from the beginning of the creation.†

*b.* The principle of historical development has its place preëminently in the kingdom of God. The events of the world run their course according to a well-defined plan, advancing through successive stages and unfoldings to a destined goal. First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn, is the process with which the Lord himself illustrates the development of his reign.

The ages anterior to the incarnation were steadily moving and pointing toward the fullness of time, unfolding more and more the conception of this "great mystery," and getting the world prepared for its appearance. Thus the philosophy of history demands a certain process of extension and development both in the Church and in the world, before the fullness of time shall again come round. The great movements of history are not hap-hazard accidents, but steps and stages in the march of God's plan, removing obstructions, uniting the nations, preparing the way of the Lord, and hastening the wished-for day. Until these have run their course and reached their teleological consummation, until the anti-Christian powers as well as the Christian Church have become alike ripe for the reaper, the end of the present order is not to be looked for. Not only must the Gospel first be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, not only must the fullness of the Gentiles come in, and the Jews as a people be brought to embrace salvation, so that the Church shall represent the totality of the nations when she welcomes her Lord to gather his elect out of all lands,‡ but the forces of evil must beforehand have attained their ultimate development. The day of Christ will not be at hand until the man of sin shall have celebrated his desperate triumph in the great Apostasy. The revelation of the son of perdition will precede the revelation of the Redeemer.§

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\* Matt. xxiv. 32, 33.

† 2 Peter iii. 3, 4.

‡ Matt. xxiv. 14; Rom. xi. 25, 26.

§ 2 Thess. ii. 2-6.

The seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent have not only all through history developed side by side toward their respective consummation, but the conflict between them has been steadily increasing in fierceness and obstinacy, so that every triumph in the kingdom of light is confronted by a corresponding energy in the realm of darkness.

The subtle representatives of evil have never been surprised. And when in the course of the zealous diffusion of the Gospel and its effectual power alike over Jews and Gentiles, they will recognize the imminence of the Parousia, their uttermost opposition to the Gospel will be put forth. The contest thickens as the end approaches. Its all-dissolving fires send forth at last, like a furnace, streams of distress, temptation and delusion which threaten to engulf the very elect.\* Such are the precursors of the Advent.

It is the generally accepted teaching of Scripture that the ever-increasing hostility to Christ will at last culminate in a personal bearer. As if to forestall the personal appearance of Christ in the glory of his power, all the anti-Christian elements will consolidate and embody themselves in "one man of sin," the actual impersonation of evil. The opposition to Christianity will be incarnate, concrete, concentrated in a personal ANTI-CHRIST. This title has been applied to various individuals and institutions in the course of history. The Dogmaticians used the term (a) *generically* for all heretics, little anti-Christes, and (b) *specifically* for that remarkable adversary described by Paul, who by way of distinction is called the great anti-Christ.† This view was generally held by the mediæval anti-hierarchical sects, and from them passed over to the Reformers‡ and the Dogmaticians, some of whom, however, adopted from the Greek Church the view that Mohammed and the Turkish power were anti-Christ, and thus held to a two-fold anti-Christ, an Eastern one and a Western. As it seems clear from his portraiture by Scripture, that anti-Christ will represent not exclusively irreligious or anti-religious forces, but, as the name indicates, will be the counterpart of the true faith and the true Redeemer,|| through manifold

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\* Matt. xxiv. 9 ff.; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 John. ii. 18.

† Schmid, pp. 658 f.

‡ Apol. Conf. p. 200, Art. Smalc. 308, 336, etc.

|| 2 Thess. ii. 9; Rev. ii. 13.

false miracles imitating and personating Christ, and as the long continued though hidden activity of anti-Christ forbids his embodiment in the life of one man, it is altogether probable that a constituent element of the final anti-Christ will be the papal imposture. Its inordinate pride, its immeasurable presumption by which it arrogates to itself boundless superiority to every power in heaven and on earth, is one of the distinctive marks of anti-Christ.\*

Hengstenberg's view of an ideal personality is a solution that is totally inadequate to the inspired representation, and it contradicts the united testimony of the Fathers, who reflected the doctrinal consciousness of the churches in which still re-echoed the oral utterances of the Apostles, and who, with one accord, regarded anti-Christ as an individual person, the incarnation and concentration of sin.

Ideal anti-Christian forces may indeed, from time to time, reveal themselves, prevailing unbelief and frightful ungodliness may in any period serve as prefigurations of the final anti-Christ, but just as the union of all soteriological types and prophecies in one person constituted the actual and living Christ, so the concentration of all the direful forms of wickedness in one colossal personality answers best to the scriptural delineation of anti-Christ.

In identifying such individual monsters as Caligula, Nero, Napoleon, with anti-Christ, the error of scholars has consisted principally in their viewing these baneful appearances as the real anti-Christ, rather than as lurid, typical precursors of the final personality in whom the God-opposing principle will embody itself and display its superhuman power.

"Almost all great movements for good or for ill have been gathered to a head by one central personal agency. There seems nothing improbable, then, judging from the analogy of the partial manifestations which we have already seen, that the centralization of the anti-Christian power may ultimately take place in the person of some one of the sons of men."†

The spirit of anti-Christ has been all along at work in these hostile forms and gigantic agencies of evil, but as a "mystery of iniquity," a power not clearly revealed, seeking to accomplish in secret,

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\* 2 Thess. ii. 3-9.

† Dean Alford. *The Greek Testament*. Vol. III. *Prolegomena on 2 Thess.*; cf. also Lange's *Commentary on the same Epistle*.



underground, its infernal aims. It is in fact hindered from the full manifestation of its character, restrained for the time from breaking out in personal embodiment and exercising its deadliest deceptions and delusions, by the *κατέχον*, by the providential coercion of temporal polity, the conservative forces which maintain the civil and social order of the world. This continuous conflict between the *ἀνομος* and the *κατέχων* constitutes the soul of history, and in consequence of it the fierce foe of redemption is held in check until redemption itself shall have achieved its triumph in the evangelization of all nations and the conversion of the ancient chosen race. Then the dykes will break and a deluge of infidelity, spiritual seduction, religious persecution, political anarchy and universal dismay will overspread the earth.\*

Thus will culminate the hostility to the gospel. But its culmination is the signal for its overthrow. It is suffered at last to reveal its true inwardness, its supreme malignity, that as a last decisive test it shall make manifest those who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.† The crisis will therefore be brief. The momentous calamities inaugurated by anti-Christ will precipitate the revelation of the Lord from heaven. Just when the distress of the Church has reached its height, and its enemies have grown perfectly confident of victory, then, no sooner, no later, will deliverance dawn in the form of the Son of man‡—and judgment too, for he will consume his enemies by the breath of his mouth and destroy them with the brightness of his coming.

Whoever, personally, the anti-Christ may be, he is of course the soul and support of evil, its concrete personal principle. His destruction is accordingly equivalent to the overthrow of the whole power of evil in the world, and if this event is not identical with the binding of Satan,§ it is certainly to be viewed as coincident with it.

2. *The Judgment.* The import and object of the Parousia are explicitly declared. "At the end of the world Christ will appear for judgment." The completeness of his triumph signalized by his glorious return implies the all-decisive judgment. Visible to all flesh, the appearance of the Lord in sublime majesty will have a momentous significance alike to unbelievers and to believers, to every disobedient creature as well as to the sanctified. It will make a full

\* Luke xxi. 25; Matt. xxiv. 8-13, 21.

† 2 Thess. ii. 9-12.

‡ Matt. xxiv. 30; Luke xxi. 27, 28.

§ Rev. xx. 2; 2 Thess. i. 7.

revelation of the real character of all and of their true relation to God, and determine finally and irrevocably their respective destiny.

That the course of this world must issue in a final retributive judgment is a postulate of the universal moral sense. It is demanded as the goal of man's moral development. It is guaranteed by his faith in the justice of God. While judgment is unmistakably present in the world, a power that makes for righteousness, sifting and separating the good from the evil and dispensing its awards to virtue and to vice; while history itself is a manifest Nemesis, a progressive judicial process; yet all admit the incompleteness, the unsatisfying and often most perplexing character of the retribution apparent in the present order of things. There seem to be marvelous inequalities, inexplicable difficulties. The course of judgment strikes human eyes at the best as relative, partial, doubtful. There is a universal appeal to a court of *dernier ressort*, a definitive absolute decision, so complete in its character and so clear in its revelation as to place both the process and the awards of judgment beyond all question.

Standing in essential connection with each other, we can not fail to notice the analogy here presented between the judgment and the Parousia. As Christ is in one sense ever coming, evincing his presence with his kingdom, so judgment is ever being exercised in its searchings, decisions, and retributions. As the former points typically to a final act, so the latter also is but the prophecy and preparation of an ultimate consummation. As the constant invisible Parousia of Christ is to eventuate in a mighty apocalypse of glory before all eyes, so the latent march of judgment must issue in an awful, resplendent revelation of its character before the universal assembly of creation.

It will accordingly be a marked feature of the judgment to bring to light all that in the moral world was hidden, to clear up all that was dark, to make an inexorable disclosure of the secrets of men's hearts and the true character and worth of their affections and their actions, to afford an unerring and public discernment between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. The judgment which constitutes the climax of the world's development, is to determine, in the light of the great white throne, the true inherent character of all moral phenomena as viewed from the standard of divine holiness. This judicial action each, so far as it affects himself, will realize as he never realized God's judgment before, while at the same time all will

recognize and approve the decision and the sentence that fall respectively upon others. In the awful glare of that day a light will burst upon the conscience such as never shone there before, and at the same time the eternal world and its past history will be so illuminated that all things will become naked and open before all eyes. The full revelation of the righteous judgment of God in the sight of men and of angels will put an end to the delusions and illusions by which the depraved have blinded themselves and others.

On this subject, too, God has not left himself without ample testimony in his word. Far back before the flood, but a few generations removed from Adam, we hear from the mouth of Enoch an explicit prophecy of the world's closing event. This day of the Lord is the final point of prophetic contemplation. All through the Old Testament and in the New, it forms the background of every apostolic proclamation,\* while the Lord's own prophetic activity closed with a description of the last judgment,† which for sublimity and power finds no parallel.

The Scriptures emphasize the import of the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is to act as the judge of the world. The judgment of mankind is committed to him who is the Head of the race, who endured its temptations in his own person, who by his own blood achieved redemption for all, and whose peculiar relation to God as well as to man gives him unique and absolute fitness for this office.‡

The seals of the book of judgment are opened by the Lamb standing in the midst of the throne.§ Yet none the less terrible are its revelations and its decisions, for the rulers and the great men, the rich and the mighty as well as every bondman and every freeman, shall seek to hide themselves from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.¶

As furthermore all judgment is determined by a certain standard so the proceedings of the great day must follow an acknowledged norm of judgment. The final awards must be determined according to the light which men had, and not according to what they had not. The basis of judgment will accordingly be the law under which the different divisions of mankind respectively lived.

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\* Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; xxiv. 25.

† Matt. xxv. 31-46.

‡ Matt. xxv. 31; John v. 22, 23, 27; Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 10.

§ Rev. v. 5, 6, 9.

¶ Rev. vi. 15, 16.

To large portions of the race no special revelation is known to have been given; yet these are not left absolutely without law, inasmuch as they are under that universal law written on men's hearts of which conscience is the exponent. By this law, therefore, now inwardly accusing or excusing them, they will ultimately stand or fall.\* The Jewish nation, on the other hand, lived under that law specifically revealed through Moses, and on this basis their eternal destiny will be decided.† Others have enjoyed the effulgence of the Gospel, clearly revealing the scope and spirituality of God's holy law, and by this light they will be judged.

But why should Jesus, the Mediator of the Gospel, have supreme judicial authority over those to whom, without fault of theirs, his Gospel never came, and who in consequence could not partake of its benefits? His peculiar fitness and authority to act as judge over all mankind rest upon grounds substantially identical with those that warrant his appointment to judge those who have accepted or rejected the great salvation. The Gospel is but the expansion, exposition and fulfillment of the law which was mediated, through Moses, and this in turn has its germinal expression in the conscience. Christ is in the largest sense the end of the law, its fullness, its concrete embodiment. All law has its fountain-head in him. The beams of that same Logos whose perfect and personal brightness is revealed in Jesus Christ, were less distinctly reflected in those mysterious symbols and prefigurations divinely given to the Jewish nation. And that same eternal orb shot forth his scattered rays over the heathen world as the *λόγος σπερματικός*, so that total darkness has never enveloped the human mind. Radiations from the Sun of righteousness have fallen upon every age of the world and upon every creature. Christ is and ever has been the true light whose rays fall upon every man that cometh into the world. He has from the beginning sustained a peculiar relation to humanity. His incarnation is not the commencement of that relation. Not sin, but the creation, brought it about. Sin clouded the affinity but did not sunder the bond. The world was made through him, and in him it consists, and humanity especially was created in him as its ideal, and may be said to have its existence and its goal in him. All the relations of God to the creature are mediated through his eternal Son.

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\* Rom. ii. 12-16.

† John v. 45.

Thus by every consideration is Jesus Christ made the judge of quick and dead, and before him shall be assembled all nations, whether they knew him as the world's Redeemer or not. He is to all the medium of their existence, the mediator of light and life. The final destiny of each one hangs indeed upon his faith, upon his relation to the grace of God in Christ; but as the faith of the patriarchs differed widely from the faith of Paul and of Luther, so there may be a dim and vague trust in the divine mercy, a certain measure of faith, among the heathen on whom the fullness of light never dawned.\*

Another difficulty connected with the Scriptural representation of the judgment is the apparent contradiction between the doctrine so explicitly taught, that every man is to be rewarded according to his works,† and the equally emphatic and cardinal gospel principle that we are not saved by works, but exclusively by grace through faith. Eternal life is a gift of God, not a merited reward.

This difficulty vanishes the moment we consider the essential relation between faith and works. Faith is the soul's normal attitude toward God, good works the manifestation of it. Faith is the inward side, works the outward form, the substantial expression and proof of faith. Faith is itself a living force. It is creative, dynamic, productive, and is in its essential core of an ethical character, so that in its operation it cannot do otherwise than bring forth fruits of love and holiness. It is faith, therefore, that determines the moral quality of actions, that forms and transforms the character in which the good works are embodied and reflected. The just lives by his faith. Faith itself is therefore reckoned as righteousness,‡ while unbelief, the want of faith, is the tap-root of all sin.§ Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Faith and good works thus form an inseparable union, while distrust of God and evil works are one in kind and character. To be judged according to one's works does not exclude the principle of faith, but reveals and demonstrates its existence or its absence, and thus implies the estimation of all actions by the in-

\* Matt. x. 41 ff.; xxv. 36 ff.

† Matt. xvi. 27; Luke xii. 47, 48; Rom. ii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 10; Eph. vi. 8; Rev. xx. 12; xxii. 12.

‡ Gen. xv. 6; Gal. iii. 6; Rom. iii. 20; iv. 16; Eph. ii. 8, 9; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. iii. 5.

§ Rom. xiv. 23.



herent force from which they sprang. It is even an Old Testament maxim in regard to works, that while man looketh on the outward appearance, God fixes his eye upon the heart. He searcheth the reins, in order that he may give every one according to his works.\* Works, then, exhibit the total result of the exercise of faith. And the judgment of Omniscience will make manifest its deeds that they are wrought in God. Thus even the reception accorded to Christ's disciples† will be found to have served as a test and proof of men's real attitude toward Christ himself, and towards righteousness—a doctrine which interprets and illustrates the judgment scene described in Matt. xxv. 31-46.

The absolute universality of the judgment presents also some problems. Our Lord, himself the judge, declares on the one hand "He that believeth on the Son is not judged," "cometh not into judgment," has "passed out of death into life."‡ And likewise, on the other hand, "He that believeth not, has been judged already, because he hath not believed." And yet it is announced in unmistakable terms that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Let it not be forgotten that a characteristic feature of the last judgment will be its public exposure of every man's moral and spiritual condition. It will be the apocalypse and visible consummation of the judicial activity which the mediatorial Son of God is exercising throughout all history. Men are not summoned before the omniscient judge that he may investigate their case and ascertain their state of reconciliation or fixed enmity, their righteous perfection or their damning guilt, nor are they summoned before the supreme bar that they may learn for themselves their true state, hear their sentence and discover their eternal destiny. Each one in the secret of his own soul is beforehand conscious of the moral import of the judgment in his own case. So far as the dead are concerned, each one secretly and with certainty knows in advance of the Parousia, what sentence the judge will pronounce upon him. But the judgment will consist in a public "Universal Exposition" of every man's record and reality. "Precisely this is the essence, and at the same time the terrible significance of the last judgment, that it is the *manifestation* of that which has been for ages concealed, and yet could not fail ultimately to become manifest."§

\* Rev. ii. 23.

† Matt. x. 40-42.

‡ John iii. 18; v. 24.

§ Van Oosterzee.

The books will be opened to the gaze of the universe, the secrets of men\* laid bare. What was long before unalterably decided in the case of each individual, and the grounds of that unalterable decision, will be brought into public view and eternally confirmed before the eyes of heaven and earth. The judgment has preëminently a cosmical significance. Hence by the dogmaticians it is called *judicium manifestum, universale*, in distinction from the *judicio particulari et occulto quod fit in morte, &c.* It is the *judicium extremum*, the most perfect and final revelation at once both of divine saving grace and of divine judicial righteousness.

The day of judgment becomes thus the counterpart and complement of the day of salvation; the final coming of the Lord is the culmination of his first coming. When he appeared in the flesh, although invested with all authority to judge, he did not appear for judgment, but for salvation.† The judicial office was held in reserve, and although salvation and judgment proceed all through history side by side, as is evinced by the flood, by the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and by the overthrow of the Jews, and although in the Old Testament prophecies and even in John the Baptist, both the salvation and the judgment to be executed by the Lord appear through prophetic perspective as a simultaneous occurrence, and as the result of one and the same Parousia, the successive stages in the fulfillment not being recognized, yet it is manifest that in his present Mediatorial office every act of the Lord is primarily an act of grace and a work of salvation. The judicial agency is however, discernible in the background, so that what is redemption to some is judgment to others.‡ The second coming will witness the reversal of this order. "At the end of the world Christ will appear for judgment." He shall come without sin,§ without any sin-atonement mediation for a doomed world. Then, after his salvation shall have been everywhere preached, only to be rejected and spurned by his foes, God will judge the world in righteousness by this same Jesus who was exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. But this very judgment will be the signal for deliverance to the afflicted and waiting bride. To them that look for him he will appear unto salvation. His advent is the realization of their blessed

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\* Rom ii. 19.

† John iii. 17, xii: 47; Heb. ix. 28; John v. 22, 27.

‡ John ix. 39; 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16; 2 Peter ii. 7, 8.

§ Heb. ix. 28.

hope—the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.\*

3. *The Resurrection.* “He will raise all the dead.” Inasmuch as the judgment is universal and the judge is always designated as He that will come to judge the quick and the dead, it must be preceded by the awakening and bringing forth of all that have fallen asleep. They cannot appear before the bar of judgment to hear their sentence, until they have been summoned from their intermediate abodes and they stand again (*ἀνάστασις*) soul united with body, in the organic and normal condition in which they lived upon earth. The award which is to be determined by the deeds in the body will not be made in the absence of that body, but with that body joined to its proper soul, restored to a state corresponding with its new sphere, and thus made capable of participating in the reward consequent upon its deeds. The first result, therefore, of the Parousia will be the raising of the dead.

This truth is derived purely and par excellence from revelation. It forms one of its distinctive doctrines, and presents to the understanding inscrutable mysteries and insoluble difficulties. “Can these bones live?” is a question which confounds reason. There is nowhere in nature any intimation of so astounding a fact, nothing which to man's natural vision presages the rising again to life of that which has actually been dissolved in death. Philosophy has conceived the soul's immortality, but is so far from discovering the body's restoration that this idea has ever provoked its ridicule.† It is a rock of offence to the natural man, who views all things from the standpoint of natural experience and sensuous materialism. The analogies which have been cited as illustrations, the phoenix, the reanimation of the earth in spring, the outgrowth of life from the dying seed, etc., all fail to establish the hope that the dead bodies which have been merged into other organic forms can ever have an actual resuscitation. The death of winter is only a burial of life, a general hibernation. The seed sown does not really die. Its innermost essence springs into life. The process which seems like a disappearance in death is in fact a development of life. If the seed once dies, it can never reappear in any form. The grain of wheat‡ may illustrate the mode, it can never demonstrate

\* Tit. ii. 13; Luke xxi. 28.

† Acts xvii. 32.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 35 ff.

the fact of the resurrection. That must be received exclusively by faith.

It lies beyond the data of sense and reason. Man cannot solve the miraculous. The awakening of the body from death is the effect of a divine fiat resounding through the silent chambers of death. It is a creation—not *ex nihilo*, but a new creating out of the ruins of the old, a regathering by God of the elementary substance that had undergone dissolution, a reforming of the corporeal structure which distinguishes man, and a reuniting of this restored body to its soul as its proper organism, a creation neither less nor more marvelous than the act of the sixth creative day, than the regeneration of the soul dead in trespasses and in sins, than the continuous formation of ordinary earthly human bodies.

As little however as reason is able to discover a future resurrection, so little is it capable of denying it. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?" And furthermore, while it cannot of itself bring forth the doctrine, yet by its postulate of a retributive final judgment, it conveys us beyond the sphere of ordinary occurrences and natural phenomena, and thereby at least prepares the way for accepting the resurrection of the body and its reunion with the soul.

Resting on this truth of reason and upon the anthropological premises of the Scriptures, the bodily rehabilitation of departed souls presents no insurmountable difficulties. It becomes, thus, not only an admissible theory but an inevitable conclusion, an inner necessity. Man according to Scripture is the unity of soul and body. Corporeity is a constituent element of humanity. Unlike the angels above him which are purely spiritual beings, and unlike the irrational species below him which have a purely physical organism, man comes into existence a union of the spiritual and the physical. He bears the image of God as a pneumatic and corporeal being. His destiny, his development to a higher stage, must take place in the sphere of a two-fold organism, the original psychical body be so penetrated and transformed by the spirit as to be raised to a pneumatic body.

Sin has disturbed his development, affecting both soul and body and their proper relation to one another. But what sin has deranged, grace is to restore. As man fell a complex being, so is he redeemed not in a part of his nature but in the entirety of his original constitution, embracing the potencies both of spirituality and corporeity.

As he died in Adam, so shall he be made alive in Christ.\* Humanity was ordained "to span the chasm between the higher world of pure spirit and the lower world of pure matter," the two constituents of man's nature linking him with both; and this goal he can reach not by the unclothing of the soul, but by the restoration of the original relation of soul and body, by the renewal and perfection of his body with his soul, by the reclamation of its prey from the hands of death and the abolition of death itself and all its consequences, and finally by the transformation of the corporeal element into a higher and spiritual state. The soul having itself been regenerated and replaced into its true position of dominion over the body, the spiritual life having permeated the entire personality and through it also sanctified the bodily nature, a final glorification of the body, a resurrection unto life, follows inevitably. While severed from a bodily organism the soul cannot be regarded in a perfect state. A disembodied spirit hovering through space cannot be the definitive stage of human development. Perfect blessedness must be realized not by a fragment of man, but by the entire man as primordially created, raised into the glorified state.

The explicit revelation of this doctrine in Holy Scripture is incontestable. It is catalogued by the apostle with its primary, fundamental doctrines.† Its denial is pronounced inconsistent with belief in the Bible, and subversive of salvation.‡ The Church has through all her ages boldly and unanimously confessed it as an essential article of her faith, and has in fact placed it in most intimate connection with the sanctification and consolation§ of believers.

Clear traces of the doctrine are found in the Old Testament. Its roots may be recognized in Gen. iii. 15. It was the possession of this hope that enabled Abraham to surrender unto death the son of promise.|| It looms forth in the peculiar exit of Enoch and Elijah from the world. It is sung of in the Psalms.¶ It is taught with especial distinctness by the later prophets, and although with some the idea may be figuratively employed, their very choice of such a figure proves their familiarity with the doctrine.\*\* "The certain

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\* 1 Cor. xv. 22.

† Heb. vi. 2.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 12, 13, 14.

§ 1 Cor. vi. 14; 1 Thess. iv. 14.

|| Heb. xi. 19.

¶ Ps. xvi. 9-11; xvii. 15; lxxiii. 23-26.

\*\* Job xix. 25-27; Isa. xxvi. 19, lxvi. 24; Ezek. xxxvii. 1-14; Dan. xii. 1-3; Hos. xiii. 14.



knowledge of this future event is presupposed, and a hope containing another truth is clothed in a figure derived from that. There is in fact no period to be found where faith can be conceived of without this hope, and no point after the first promise where it could for the first time have arisen." \*

An irrefutable proof of its being known to the Jews, especially of the later era, is the fact that in the time of Jesus it was the current popular faith of the orthodox. Those who opposed the doctrine were confessedly unbelievers and materialists,† and when they confront our Lord with their vaunted difficulties on the subject he charges them with ignoring the Scriptures.‡ Hostile and bitter as were the Pharisees against Christ and his apostles, on this point they viewed them with great favor, as teaching in consonance with their own tenets the resurrection of the dead.§

The clear, direct utterances of the Lord on this subject are familiar to all.|| With his apostles it was a central truth in their epistles, and an ever prominent and favorite theme in their discourses. One of the grandest and most extended arguments of the whole New Testament is devoted to the unfolding and enforcement of this doctrine over against the Corinthian skeptics.¶

In addition to the explicit promises of the Scriptures which establish beyond question the future reanimation of the body, it has another immovable support in the historic fact of our Lord's resurrection. In all things our example, the prototype and representative of the race, his resurrection foreshadows the final issue of death and life to mankind. It is the assurance and the pledge of our resurrection.

Ideally this truth has been already experienced. Believers are represented as having died with Christ and as being risen with him.\*\* In the mystical union, every act of the Head is the act of the members. But a more complete realization of it will take place

\* Von Hoffman, Schriftbeweis.

† Acts xxiii. 8.

‡ Matt. xxii. 29; John xx. 9; Acts ii. 25-31.

§ Acts xxiii. 7, 9; xxiv. 14; Mark xii. 28; Luke xx. 39; John xi. 24.

|| Luke xiv. 40; xx. 35; John v. 28, 29; vi. 40, 44, 54; xi. 23.

¶ 1 Cor. xv; Acts iv. 2; xvii. 31; xxiv. 14, 15; Rom. viii. 23; 1 Cor. vi. 14; Phil. iii. 11, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 13-17; Rev. xx. 12 f.

\*\* Rom. vi. 5-8; Coll. iii. 1; i. 18.

in their own bodily resurrection, which is potentially involved in his resurrection who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept.\* He is the Resurrection, its personal principle, its life-centre. Those organically united with him will, in the nature of the case, partake of his resurrection-life, will rise with him out of death unto life eternal.† When he shall appear they will be like him, their vile bodies changed and fashioned like unto his own glorious body.‡ Neither the actual resurrection of our Lord's body, nor the explicit language of both the Master and the apostles, can admit any explanation of the resurrection which restricts it to a moral rising up from the fall, a "standing again" in the sphere of obedience and holiness, or interprets it as a mere figurative representation of the soul's immortality, or places its occurrence immediately after death. If there be no resurrection like Christ's then is Christ not risen, and in the surrender of that historic and fundamental fact is involved the collapse of our faith.§ Paul pronounces it an error subversive of the faith to hold that the resurrection is past already, || *i. e.*, experienced in our spiritual renewal.

The resurrection is uniformly represented as taking place at the last day,¶ the dead are designated πνεύματα, spirits now destitute of embodiment, but clothed in white robes and awaiting that completion of the world's history which cannot transpire until the coming of the Lord.\*\*

But with what body do they come? While the explicit Scripture representations of the resurrection cannot be satisfied with any theory that falls short of the coming forth of the body from the grave, a raising to life of what was sown into the earth in death,†† it does not follow that the body which rises will be absolutely identical with the body which dies. The view that has been largely maintained, of an entire reproduction of all the organs and all the constituent elements of the body,‡‡ is to be rejected—not because it is incomprehensible and deemed impossible by science, but primarily because it has no warrant in the word of God. It is not the result of a sci-

\* Acts xxvi. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 20; vi. 14.

† 1 Thess. iv. 14.

‡ Phil. iii. 21.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 14; Acts xvii. 31.

|| 2 Tim. ii. 18.

¶ John vi. 40, 54; xi. 26.

\*\* Heb. xii. 23; Rev. vi. 9, 11; 2 Cor. v. 3; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 16,

†† 1 Cor. xv.

‡‡ Gerh. viii., 419. So also Baier and others.

entific exegesis. It does not harmonize with clearly established premises in regard to the relations and conditions of the future. In that day, when all things shall be glorified, when the physical shall be transfigured into the pneumatic, when all the results of redemption shall rise from a terrestrial to a celestial and spiritual condition, it is preposterous to suppose that the grand harmony should be disturbed by such an incongruity as the old physical body with its flesh and blood, its organs of nutrition and reproduction. So gross a doctrine, so absurd an invention, is not to be charged upon inspired teachers.

The soul of Webster when a child was identical with the soul of the statesman expounding the Constitution in the national forum, yet so entirely changed that its identity might not be recognized. The present body is the body that shall rise and shine forever, yet it differs from that as the glory of a terrestrial body differs from that of a celestial one, as corruption differs from incorruption, as a psychical body from a spiritual body, as a bare seed from the plant which grows out of it, as the image of the earthly differs from the image of the heavenly, as mortality differs from immortality.\* Greater contrasts than these are inconceivable. And it is a monstrous perversion of Scripture to wrest from them the perfect identity of the resurrection body with the present organism.

So far from teaching this literal, realistic, earthly identity, both the Lord and St. Paul distinctly deny it. "According to their unequivocal word, all that belongs exclusively to the senses falls away in the life of the resurrection; and thus must all be at once eliminated from our notion of resurrection which is opposed to the nature of a spiritual body."† "It is indeed this body," says Origen, "but not such as it was." Flesh and blood—and St. Paul is here not on the subject of depravity—"flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Corruption does not inherit incorruption." Flesh and blood do not essentially constitute the body, only its present structure as an earthly, physical body.‡ Why should the bodies of the risen be identical with the earthly body, when this earthly body, clothing the saints still living, shall itself be changed at the very moment of the resurrection? § The renewed body must be adapted to its new sphere, its exalted office, its glorious environ-

\* 1 Cor. xv. 40.

† Van Oosterzee, Matt. xxii. 30, 1 Cor. vi. 13, xv. 50.

‡ Burger.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.

ment. Hence it must be endowed with new attributes, with spiritual qualities, while those which adapted it peculiarly to earthly relations disappear with its earthly state.\* In its innermost core it will be the same body that we have now, even as the polished diamond is in substance nothing else than the original carbon. Luther's views on this point are noticeable both for their sublimity and their freedom from the gross extreme so largely held in the Church: "It will indeed be the same body, but with changed appearance and adaptation, not given to eating, drinking, digestion, etc. It will require none of those things which pertain to this perishable life" †—"a body unrestricted by the limitations of space, perfectly adapted to the service of the spirit so that we may move from place to place as the sun through the heavens, yea in an instant be down upon the earth or above in heaven." "It is called a new spiritual body because it will be spiritually nourished, sustained by God, and have its life immediately in him." "Since flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God, they must die, dissolve and perish, and a new spiritual nature must arise that it may enter into heaven." ‡

The essence of the body is its form, which throughout the earthly mode of existence ever keeps the same in spite of the constant material changes going on. This essential form, the corporeal structure, will be restored each to its own soul in its individual character and perfection, so that each person in the final judgment may receive *τα διὰ του σώματος*, the things done through the instrumentality of the body.

The translators of the Apostles' Creed have done wisely in giving us the expression "resurrection of the body"—a phrase more scriptural and therefore less likely to be misunderstood than the original term *σάρξ*. The German translation has the equivalent of the original, although Luther maintained that "resurrection of the body" was much more intelligible to the Saxon mind and therefore preferable.§ The relation of the new body to the old is accordingly characterized both by sameness and by distinction. The new is essentially one in form and in elementary substance with the old, but distinguished from it by its endowments. It is not only purified from all the repulsive disfiguration and weakness resulting from inherent sinfulness, and restored to that original beauty designed by the

\* 1 Cor. vi. 13, 14; Luke xx. 36.

† Vol. xix. 133.

‡ Ibid. 243, 252, 255, cf. Gerhard xx. 416 ff.

§ Cat. Maj., Sym. Lib., 459.

Creator, but it is so permeated and endowed with spiritual power as to be made a partaker of the spirit's life and immortality—no longer a hindrance or a limitation to the soul's free and perfect action, but a fitting instrument for the exercise and reflection of its loftiest energies, a perfect expression of its peculiar individuality. "The elementary substance after having passed through the process of dissolution, having become purified and refined, and raised above the former torpid and confined condition, will itself become spiritual without ceasing to be material; \* \* the renewed pneumatic body will serve as the transparent expression of the sanctified personality, the mirror of its internal purity and moral beauty." \* "The *σωμα πνευματικόν* is in its innermost essence identical with the present body, so that the latter is to be regarded as the *unexpanded germ* of the former, the former as the *glorious development* of the latter." †

The resurrection body of our Lord, though not fully glorified before the ascension, affords some illustration of the change which the resurrection body undergoes. How unlike his form so familiar to the disciples! Now unrecognized by those to whom he was nearest, now coming into their midst in a closed chamber, now manifesting himself to the two disconsolate souls on their way to Emmaus, and then suddenly vanishing, finally floating on a cloud beyond the reach of sight. Surely here is a body no longer subject to the conditions of a purely physical organism. It is not restricted to space. It has the power of revealing itself when and where it pleases the Lord. That body is the first fruits. Between that and the bodies of believers there exists a vital union, so that as they have borne the image of the earthly, the first man, they shall also bear the image of the heavenly, the Lord from heaven.‡

The same considerations which assure the resurrection unto eternal life, point also to a resurrection unto shame and everlasting contempt on the part of the unregenerate.§ By analogy the character of the resurrection bodies of the ungodly may be likewise foreshadowed. Nearly all the declarations of Scripture refer exclusively to the resurrection of the saints, doubtless for the reason that the doctrine is as a rule presented in the light of consolation to believers.

\* Thomasius, *Christi Person u. Werk*.

† Julius Müller.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 49. For the language of the Symbols of. Cat. Maj. 458 f. F. C. 520, 583. On the Dogmaticians, see Schmid and Bretschneider.

§ Dan. xii. 2.



They are comforted with this glorious prospect of absolute victory over death. The resurrection of the wicked receives only incidental mention.\* It is with them not in the proper sense a resurrection to life, a "standing again," but an awakening unto judgment which with this event will be finally consummated, and which, as in the case of the righteous, requires the entire man, body and soul, to appear for judgment and to participate in the eternal awards. Hence, as Gerlach observes, it is not properly a resurrection, it is a continual dying, it is the second death instead of a second life. There is accordingly on the part of the inspired writers no attempt to describe the body which awakes only to receive and endure its awful, eternal retribution. But as the condition of the wicked contrasts in every respect with that of the godly, we may conclude that this oppositeness will also manifest itself in the resurrection bodies, and from the same law which underlies the resurrection of the just it follows that the bodies of the wicked will at the resurrection correspond to their state of shame and woe, bear the impress of their inward deformity and wickedness, and prove a source and an instrument of their eternal sufferings. "For it is the design of all corporeity to be the image and expression of what is within.† Hence, "Impiorum corpora sunt vasa ad ignominiam et contumeliam."‡

4. *Eternal Life*.—Humanity restored and perfected in the entirety of its constitution is now in a condition to receive and to enjoy the blessed awards of the righteous Judge. One great purpose of his coming is to "bestow upon the pious and elect eternal life and perennial joy."

Who are properly designated by these titles is evident from Arts. V. and VI.: those namely who by the agency of the Holy Ghost, through the word and sacraments, have attained the faith that God alone for the sake of Christ justifies those who believe that they are received into favor for Christ's sake, and in whom this faith hath brought forth good fruits in loving obedience to God's command. As the specific events of the Parousia and the Judgment do not, as was shown, preclude the continual coming of the Lord and his constant exercise of judgment in the world, so also the gift of eternal life bestowed on that great day must not be viewed as its initial stage, the first taste, the first experience of the nature and the power of an endless life. That life is the immediate result of the believer's

\* John v. 29. † Thomasius, Christi Person u. Werk. ‡ Gerhard xix., 38.

union with Christ. He that believeth on the Son has everlasting life. The instant he believes there is kindled in him, in its incipient form, that same life which he will receive in its fullness when his Lord in whom this life is now hid shall be revealed from heaven. The germ of life begotten of the Spirit upon the earth will then be unfolded as the crown of life. Holiness and blessedness above are but the perfection of what was initiated by saving power below. Now are we the sons of God,\* having the earnest of our inheritance, the first fruits of the Spirit, while we await the redemption of the body when humanity with its entire organism reconstructed shall be in a condition to enter upon the fullness of joy provided by divine love from the foundation of the world.

The nature of that state into which the righteous shall finally enter is not revealed with clearness. These lofty heights become invisible from their very brightness and elevation. They are indeed represented to us under the forms of the most attractive and exalted imagery, but the very "abundance of this imagery overwhelms us by the beauty of its colors. What a Paradise has that is charming, a Father's house that is lovely, a city of God that is attractive, a Repast that is refreshing, a Temple that is sacred and blessed,"† all these and many others combine to exhibit the portion of those admitted into the kingdom of the Father. Such metaphors are undoubtedly designed to create in our minds some conception of Heaven as well as to attract our hearts. But it is impossible for earthly imagery and earthly language to impart to our earthly perception any adequate idea of scenes that lie beyond the realm of sense. There is serious danger of making heaven too earthly, too gross, too material, and we are very significantly admonished that neither sense, reason nor feeling can forecast what God hath prepared for them that love him. Revelation alone can give faith a presentiment by the Holy Ghost.‡ We should therefore be intent on forming spiritual conceptions of the state of glory, without excluding the important truth that its blessedness is such as to be enjoyed by the whole man.

The negative aspects of heaven come nearest the grasp of the understanding. The soul will be absolutely free from sin. Through the resurrection, original sin will have been utterly uprooted and de-

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\* 1 John iii. 2; Eph. i. 14; Rom. viii. 23; 1 Pet. i. 12.

† Van Oosterzee.

‡ 1 Cor. ii. 9.

stroyed. All consciousness of guilt will be swallowed up in the joy of an irrevocable pardon and the sense of perfect harmony with the will of God. The soul will have been finally rescued from all the misery to which the transgression of God's holy law exposed it, and if heaven had nothing further in store than the absence of sin with its causes and consequences, this alone would be an inexhaustible fountain of joy to the heart. To comprehend furthermore the freeness and the fullness, the entire scope and supreme import of redemption, to apprehend something of the height and depth of that love which gave itself for us, to realize the termination of the conflict with flesh and sense and Satan, and to enjoy the prospect of everlasting rest, must afford to ransomed spirits boundless and inconceivable bliss.

Some of the positive elements of eternal life fall likewise within our present reach. Foremost among these will be the perfection of man's moral development. Life in heaven implies spiritual ripeness, ethical beauty, moral power, joyful obedience, adoring love and gratitude to God, complete union with him through Christ. To think of beings entering heaven who are not in moral accord with the key-note of its bliss is to annihilate heaven itself. Holiness is its first characteristic. The pure in heart shall see God. When they shall see him as he is they will be like him, purified even as he is pure, partakers of his nature.\* The perfection of bliss follows from the perfection of the whole man.†

As just indicated, it is clearly taught that the blessed will enjoy the vision of God. The saints are forever with the Lord. Their joy flows essentially from his presence.‡ They have the *visio beatifica*. Quenstedt calls this "the immediate sight of God," and others specifically designate his essence as the object of the vision beatific. While some regard the intuitive reason as the organ of this vision and make the latter to consist in the immediate ecstatic contemplation of the nature of God by the eye of the spirit, others have even thought that it would be mediated by the glorified eye of the body, and still another view is that of an immediate knowledge of God, such as spirits have of one another.

\* Matt. v. 8; 1 John iii. 2, 3; 2 Pet. i. 4.

† 1 Cor. xiii. 9 f.; Eph. v. 27.

‡ Job xix. 26 f.; Ps. xvi. 11, xvii. 15, xlii. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 17; Rev. xxii. 3, etc.

Inasmuch as God in his infinite essence is invisible,\* the beatific vision must be conceived of rather as the sense of his peculiar nearness, the realization of his glory, the recognition of his gracious manifestations, which in a measure were vouchsafed to his saints on earth and the promise of which often cheered and sustained them.† Thus, even in this life, men have seen him that is invisible.‡ Faith in proportion to its strength gives the pure in heart, even amidst the dimness and darkness of this life, a vision of God, a view of his perfections such as the world cannot have.§ The full vision of God results from the most intimate communion of will and life and love with God. This is effected through Christ, and herewith we find doubtless the most satisfactory solution of this subject. In the exalted, glorified, personal presence of the God-man, the Logos, through whom God has ever revealed himself, saints will have the vision of God. They who behold the Son will then in a heavenly sense behold in him also the Father. All the revelations and gifts of God to man are communicated through Christ. The crowning revelation, the vision of God, will come through the same medium. Our relation to God, through the mediator Jesus Christ, is eternal. The infinite light and life that rise in the invisible heart of the Father stream to us from the theanthropic heart of the glorified Son, the Omega as well as the Alpha of our redemption, our guide forever to the living fountains.|| The Lamb will be in the midst of the throne, the light of the eternal city, the mediating cause and centre of all blessedness. Now, rejoicing in unclouded communion with the God-man, saints will have the most perfect communion of love and of life with the Father and through the Holy Ghost. It is, in fact, their particular relation to the enthroned redeemer, their ever-brightening, ever-deepening knowledge of owing their salvation entirely to him, that will constitute the peculiar occasion of their perennial praise and thanksgiving. This distinguishes their joy and their glory from that of the angels.¶

The fellowship with one another, which is a marked feature of the joy of heaven, the redeemed will have likewise through him who

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\* 1 Tim. vi. 10; Exod. xxxiii. 20; John i. 18.

† Gen. xxiii. 30; Deut. v. 24; Is. vi. 5; Gerh., ix, 277.

‡ Heb. xi. 2.

§ John xiv. 21-23, xvii. 24.

|| Rev. vii. 17.

¶ Rev. v. 8, 9.

has not only united God and man, but who has also bound man to man in the most loving and lofty brotherhood. The separation made between men by sin, the envy, the hatred, the strife, the violence that have raged among those who are formed of one blood, are taken away in Christ, and through him, their common Head, men are drawn together again. He dwells in each and thus effects their union with each other, filling all with the same life, so that as once they all suffered when one member suffered, now they all rejoice in one another, the joy of one is the joy of all.\* This is undoubtedly the significance of the Feast, under which figure eternal life is so often exhibited. Heaven is the synonym of society, the most loving association of kindred spirits who have in each other a perennial feast—the Lord at the head of the table drinking with them the new wine of the kingdom. The restrictions, the hypocrisies, the artificial forms that characterize earthly society, will be displaced by perfect freedom, transparency, congeniality. The unison of character will bind together the prince and the beggar.† Social converse among refined and elevated spirits gives even here the noblest enjoyment; how infinitely more glorious there, where the select nobility of character shall be gathered from all ages and shall sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

The joy of such a fellowship is inconceivable, except on the basis of the mutual recognition of those chosen and perfected unto eternal life. Although it is clearly indicated that earthly and temporal relationships shall have disappeared,‡ yet, memory being undestroyed and knowledge infinitely heightened, the hope that we shall know each other there is certainly not without warrant in reason. The Scriptures, however, offer on this point nothing beyond bare intimations,§ much as poetry and the natural longings of the human heart—themselves a prophecy of the heavenly recognition—may have dilated upon it. Some hold that this is presupposed, but the reserve of Scripture ought to admonish us. We are only too prone to base our highest ideal of eternal life upon the hope of having our loved ones there given back to us. We would fain circumscribe the heavenly joy as we do the earthly to our own immediate family, but the

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\* John xvii. 21–23; xv. 1–5.

† Luke xvi. 23.

‡ Luke xx. 35, 36.

§ Matt. xvii. 3; Luke xvi. 9, 23; John xvi. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20; iv. 17, 18.



prospect of glory as disclosed to us is not that we depart to be with our loved ones, but to be with our Loved One—not primarily to have an eternal family reunion, but to be “forever with the Lord.”

While rest and peace and joy are foreshadowed as essential elements in the happiness of glory, that state must not be viewed as the paradise of idleness. Even earthly life, weighed down with clogs, means action, motion, occupation, how much more the life eternal, which is as much more intense than the present as it is more enduring. It implies capacity for supreme activity. Heaven will not be a museum of fossils or a gallery of sculpture. We cannot doubt that both the objective scenes of glory and the subjective capabilities will be so adapted to each other as to secure to the redeemed the highest and most constant employment without exhaustion and without weariness. Not labor, but labor “in the sweat of thy face” is the curse of sin.

Of the nature of the saints' occupation we may form no proper conception, especially in its relations to the body, except so far as it serves the soul as its organ and reflection; but who can doubt that the mental faculties, relieved from all the burdens and fetters that hindered their free and full activity here, and immeasurably quickened and exalted, with the full revelation of God's glory exciting every sense and affection, will be kindled into a degree of action transcending everything of which we now know or dream. The mind has here at best but a partial development. It merely grapples the objects it pursues. There it may go on expanding forever, mounting to the highest truth, mastering the most glorious task. One need but think of all the unsolved problems in redemption, the profound mysteries of theology, the inscrutable course of providence, the transcendent and appalling questions of philosophy, to see that opportunities will not be wanting to call for the most intense exercise of the intellectual powers, and that under the refulgence of that light which renders the sun superfluous, there will be a pursuit of knowledge without hindrance and a progress in it without limit. So analogy suggests an ever-increasing measure of moral and spiritual perfection through the continuous exercise of the moral endowments and the religious faculty. Established in holiness beyond the liability of sinning, the saints will yet be capable of higher and higher reaches, and destined to a career of endless progression toward the absolute holiness of God, without ever passing the line that separates

the finite from the infinite. Besides, with the ever-widening knowledge of the glorious attributes of God there will be an ever-deepening love for him, a fuller moral appreciation of his salvation, and a more intense outpouring of thanksgiving and praise.\* Not eternal sameness, therefore, is the law of heaven, but eternal growth and development. Eternal rest will be enjoyed in the sphere of eternal activity. "The characteristic of perfection is not absolute, unalterable sameness, but the harmonious blending of unity and variety, individuality and solidarity, of spirit and nature, of ethical divine beauty and realistic divine glory—a conjunction of receptivity and activity."†

This fully meets the objection that endless sameness of occupation, of even the noblest enjoyment, is inseparable from the idea of tedium and wearisomeness. Eternity is not a mere succession of time, a simple unchanging continuity, such as here wearies the mind whether employed or not, nor are we to think of such a partial exercise of the faculties as leaves some dormant while others are on a strain, but

"Every power finds sweet employ,"

while the stream of bliss flows on uninterrupted, ever changing yet ever the same. There is no danger that the joys of eternal life will lose their ineffable relish through unchanging continuance. Such is the boundless extent, beauty and glory of the material world that one might here be unintermittingly absorbed in the contemplation and study of these wonders. Yet these are but the vague shadows of the illimitable realm of spirit, the dim reflection of the Creator's resplendent glory. If the fullness of these can never be exhausted, and men's hearts kindle more and more the longer they contemplate them, how can the joy of the saints ever be palled with the vision of his infinite personal perfections reflected in infinite revelations of glory?

Thus the idea of degrees of blessedness may be argued. If there is progression it is self-evident that every new stage attained is higher than the previous one. Nor is the ratio of growth the same with all, any more than the measure of their fruitfulness here.‡ One star differeth from another star in glory.§ All were originally not

\* Rev. vii. 9, 10.

† Thomasius, *Christi Person u. Werk*.

‡ Matt. xiii. 8, 23.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42; 2 Cor. ix. 6; Luke xix. 15-19.

endowed with equal capacities nor favored with the same privileges. The redeemed will preserve their individuality. To the noble army of martyrs who attested their faith with their blood, the Church spontaneously assigns the highest rank. "*Erunt enim discrimina gloriæ sanctorum.*"\* All share essentially the same eternal life, but there are "*bona accessoria*," "the same essential blessedness yet difference in accidental endowments," "accessory rewards."† A crown awaits all, but each has its peculiar adornments. All who are in vital union with Christ shall participate in his glory, yet the illustrious founders of his kingdom are ordained to twelve specific thrones when the Son of Man shall be seated on his throne.‡

That these distinctions and grades are due in a measure to the principle of rewards, does not in any wise detract from the riches of God's grace, or render eternal life any less the free gift of sovereign mercy. All owe their salvation and their glory to infinite grace, yet after their pardon and renewal the career of some has been more deserving, more meritorious, than that of others. All have not loved equally, nor suffered equally; and while it is still grace that confers each separate honor, while it is nevermore payment as of a debt, the reward in each case infinitely transcending the desert, and given alone for the merits of Christ, yet does the measure of our service and suffering in some degree determine the measure of honor and glory that awaits us, so that there will be rendered to every man according to his deeds.§ The toil and conflict of persevering faith will by no means be overlooked in the final award.

Nor is there any danger that the perfect harmony of heaven will be disturbed by such distinctions. Harmony, so far from excluding diversity and gradations, is the result of them. Each will share in the glory of the whole and the whole will participate in the glory of each, so intimate is the fellowship, so ardent the love for each other, and so admirable the divine plan of diversity in unity.

The New Testament representations of eternal life appear to embrace the idea of locality as well as that of state or condition. They identify heaven with the radiant abode of God and the angels, which the Old Testament conceived as located beyond the stars. The dogmaticians represent it as "*a certain  $\pi\acute{o}\tau\eta$  in which the elect partake of eternal joy and glory, called heaven on account of its*

\* Apol. Conf. pp. 146, 148, 120.

† Quenstedt 1, p. 559.

‡ Matt. xix. 28.

§ Apol. Conf. 148; Rom. ii. 6; 1 Cor. iii. 6; Rev. xxii. 12; John xii. 26.

beauty, height, immensity and majesty," "the place in which the blessed will see God,"\* although they admit the impossibility of determining anything concerning the place or its character. As there is to be a new earth, as it would accord with the idea of eternal fitness that the planet on which our Lord wore the crown of thorns should also honor him with the royal diadem, and that the ground which was cursed through man's sin should with him be also renewed and glorified, it is not an unreasonable hope that this earth may be the future and eternal home of redeemed humanity.†

The Holy City, the New Jerusalem shall come down from God out of heaven and fill the earth with the glory of God. Heaven will thus blend with earth, the boundary line between the two will be effaced, and the tabernacle of God set up with men.‡

5. *Eternal Punishment.* With the complete triumph of the church and the attainment of man's blessed goal will coincide the discomfiture and destruction of her enemies. Coming at last as Judge the Lord "will condemn wicked men and devils to be forever tormented." The judgment will not merely make manifest the supreme distinction between the good and the evil, but to the latter like the former it will prove a just and final retribution. With the light of Omniscience turned upon their inward condition and their history, the wicked will appear in the frightful reality of their state and receive the ultimate and awful penalty of their deeds.

In the world's true development there can be no other outcome to the moral government of the universe. God's hatred of sin is no mere dream. The history of mankind is a fiery illustration of his terrible wrath against disobedience. The very face of nature shows the awful traces of his judgment. A universal elegy sounds throughout the chambers of creation. Nature animate and inanimate is groaning under the curse of a world's sin. And yet the rebellion goes on—grim, determined, unchecked, resisting alike the pleas of mercy and recovery, and the threats of wrath and woe. With all the natural consequences of evil and the evident positive punishments that are unerringly inflicted upon it even here, the hand of divine justice is stayed by the arm of divine mercy. The king is on the throne now to save, and, intent on the gracious work of recovering a fallen world, he endures with infinite long-suffering the present continu-

\* Gerhard. Matt. v. 12, vi. 20; Luk. vi. 23, xii. 33; John. xvii. 24; 1 Pet. i. 14.

† Matt v. 5.

‡ Rev. xxi. 23.

ance of evil, reserving the final verdict and its execution until the great and terrible day of his wrath shall have come.\* Whatever of punishment is now administered is confessedly only partial, a sure promise of full and final retribution to the impenitent.

On this doctrine the Scriptures are fearfully explicit. They denounce terrible punishments upon all who continue in disobedience, unbelief and impenitence.† The most horrible imagery is employed to exhibit the sufferings which are in reserve for those who die in their sins,‡ and the fact that the representations of them are largely or wholly figurative does not relieve but rather intensify their frightful character. The best teachings of reason point unmistakably to the same *dénouement*. Whatever goodish sentimentalism for evil-doers may prevail in some quarters, whatever general indifference may be felt toward wickedness owing to our familiarity with it, and in view of our own participation in it, both reason and conscience make us at times hear their demand for the punishment of wickedness. The culpability of sin allows of no other issue. There are cases in which unrighteousness reaches such proportions that the very stones call for retribution, and nothing is regarded as so detrimental to the common welfare and so destructive to society as the escape of the evil-doer unwhipped of justice. The inextinguishable moral sense within us cannot endure the thought of his crimes going unpunished. It is a necessity of our moral being that we are pained when the wicked do not suffer. This feeling of indignation, at wrong therefore we justly ascribe to God.§

The objection that man suffers sufficiently for his misdeeds in this life is without any real force. Although misery is here inseparable from sin, it would be impossible to demonstrate that the most wicked endure the severest suffering. Nay, quite the reverse is psychologically evident. The longer and the deeper men's continuance in sin, the more insensible they grow to its punishments. The more a man deserves penalty, the less he suffers its infliction. No one in fact can ever have anything like a just and adequate punishment until he

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\* Rev. vi. 17, xi. 18.

† John iii. 36; Matt. xiii. 41, 42; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9; Rev. xxi. 8.

‡ Rev. xiv. 10f.; xix. 20; xx. 14, 15; xxi. 8; Matt. ii. 30; v. 22, 29, 30; xviii. 8; xxv. 41; Mark ix. 43-45; Jude 6, 13.

§ J. P. Thompson, "Love and Penalty." Cicero's First Oration against Cataline.



sees himself as he really is, until in the presence of embodied and absolute holiness he awakens to the revelation of his true condition and the awful import of sin. He must "come to himself," he must have in his soul the sense of God's holy wrath against sin, ere he can have any suffering at all commensurate with his disobedience and depravity. Apart from this, punishment can never answer its just purpose. Independent of the Scriptures, accordingly, reason, with its slumbering but never extinct categorical imperative, with its inexorable demand that wrong shall be punished, and with its recognition of a present power that makes for righteousness, and in part judges sin even in this sphere of mingled good and evil,\* utters the direful prophecy of an ultimate retribution. God's government of the world becomes an appalling riddle if at the end of its course there remains no punishment for the wicked. But for the conviction that the penalty is only delayed to the proper day and that retribution is absolutely certain, despair must settle down upon the moral universe, the forces of our moral nature suffer a total wreck, and society experience inevitable dissolution. †

Reason believes in a divine ruler, believes that the attributes of divine wisdom, justice and righteousness are eternally active in behalf of the moral order of the world. It believes that according to analogy, evil like good will have its ultimate goal, its appropriate results. Hence it concludes that there will be no breaking down of the divine law when the final crisis arrives, no paralysis of judgment in the moment of its final execution. God is not mocked. We claim perfection for no other government, but in the kingdom of God the sowing must be harvested. As the supreme moral judge there rests with God the authority and the power, some would say the obligation, of enforcing the penalty for transgression. That he is even now in terrible earnest, that his wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, is dreadfully evident;‡ but what is this provisional condemnation of sin compared with that awful revelation of wrath when he shall appear upon his judicial throne and judgment will be no longer delayed by forbearance nor tempered by mercy.

The objection urged on the score of the infinite benevolence of

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\* Jer. ii. 19.

† Ps. lxxiii. Plutarch, "Delay of the Deity in the punishment of the wicked."

‡ Rom. i. 18.

God, would bear equally against all retributive consequences of sin upon earth. Besides, it must ever be borne in mind that the Infinite is not a being of a single attribute which sways all his actions. He is at once a God of absolute justice and boundless mercy, and with him these two perfections are not in conflict, but in supreme harmony.

But why, it may be asked, should the devils receive their sentence along with that of wicked men? We remark:

1. That that day is in every sense and for all the world the period of judgment. If there had even been no connection between devils and men, the judgment of the former would as truly fall within this period as the trial and punishment of different criminals occurs in the session of the same court and under the same judge, although they sustain no other relations to each other than that of being alike transgressors of the law.

2. The devils have been so directly connected with the entrance of sin among mankind and its course of human development, as to render it meet that when the full results of sin upon humanity shall be made apparent and forever fixed, the authors of all this wretchedness should then once and for all realize their own doom and punishment.

3. The power of sin in the world is viewed by the Scripture as an organized realm, a kingdom with its legitimate head and ministers and subjects. This kingdom is in direct and deadly opposition to the kingdom of Christ; the latter was established for the overthrow of the former, hence the ultimate victory of the empire of righteousness will signalize the absolute overthrow and irretrievable ruin of all the powers and subjects of darkness.\* Joined to each other in life, in their enmity to God and righteousness,† it is fit that they should go down together to the realm originally prepared for the devil and his angels.‡

The precise nature of those torments to which wicked men and devils are to be condemned, we are not able to define. They are represented under types of material figures, which disclose, indeed, their horrible and irremediable character,§ but as they are sufferings in another sphere of existence, where all the circumstances will be

\* Rev. xx. 10; Jude 6.

† Acts xiii. 10.

‡ Matt. xiii. 25, 38; John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8.

§ Matt. viii. 12; xiii. 41 f.; xxv. 41; 2 Thess. i. 7-9.

entirely changed, it is impossible now to conceive or portray their specific forms. Future punishment will necessarily differ in many respects from temporal punishment. "The latter was partly delayed by the long-suffering, partly lessened by the mercy of God, partly concealed from the eyes of others, partly confined within a certain space; in the future retribution the opposite of all this will be the case."\* In all things the counterpart of heaven, the indication seems conclusive that this punishment will be endured not only in a certain subjective state, but in an actual place, however ignorant we may be of its location or its peculiar nature. Such expressions as ὁπου,† ἐκεῖ,‡ εἰς τον τοπον τουτουι,§ imply something beyond the sense of the divine wrath or the horrors of conscience. They point to a local habitation.

Besides, the condemned, as we have seen, are to enter into what was prepared for the devil and his angels.|| That a state purely subjective could be prepared for one class of beings and then taken possession of by another, is inconceivable. Devils and other damned spirits may have a hell within them, and at the same time be confined to a hell around them. As a place fitted up for devils and adapted to the condition of those who share their moral condition and their miserable fate, there can be no doubt that its peculiar character and environment will combine to aggravate their woe. It must be an inconceivable, dreary, loathsome, horrible realm, an infernal prison-house, the blackness of darkness.¶

Subjectively considered, the extreme misery of the damned may be regarded, negatively, as the privation of all good, the loss of all that was pursued as good on earth, as well as the final loss of that which should have been the *summum bonum*. The desire for sensuous and earthly indulgences will doubtless continue and with an ever-increasing intensity, but, as the means of obtaining them are no more at hand, this insatiable craving can be answered only by the wail of despair. Since God is the soul's true portion, and holy conformity to his law its essential medium of happiness, final exclusion from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power,\*\* the complete absence of harmony with his will and a total

\* Van Oosterzee.

† Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.

‡ Matt. viii. 12; xiii. 42.

§ Luke xvi. 28; Acts i. 25.

|| Matt. xxv. 41.

¶ Jude 6.

\*\* 2 Thess. i. 9.

separation from all the elements of joy and blessedness which, through the institutions of grace and the presence of godly souls, still intermingled with the course of the unholiest earthly life, this absolute withdrawal of every fountain of blessedness must leave the lost in a state of inconceivable woe. The portraiture of the rich man in hell is a picture of direful want, exquisite, helpless, tormenting destitution, aggravated by the memory of former bounty, the consciousness of lost opportunity, the dread of increasing miseries, the knowledge of others' bliss, the unavailing cry for some alleviation, all heightened by the reproaching consciousness of having had it in his power to escape this lot. How the soul must writhe under this aggregation of horrors, this intolerable burden of its own accumulated sins and follies and losses. The strength, too, of the condemned, as well as all other resources by which men in this life support their burdens, will likewise have passed from them, so that what they might with a degree of fortitude have endured in the flesh becomes insupportable under the consciousness of utter imbecility. Some alleviation might be thought of, but they cannot move toward the fountain from which a single drop might assuage their torment, they cannot communicate with others whose detention from their place of torment might make one atom less in the concentrated bitterness of their cup.

They must likewise realize the deep shame of their condition. The judgment will make a revelation of men, will disclose the secrets of their hearts, expose as under the glare of flaming fire the unsightly deformities and pollutions, the inherent baseness of sin; and under the changed scenes and the awful consciousness of realities, souls must feel how despicable they have made themselves in the sight of men, of angels and of God, while the vision of the glorified who were washed from their sins and transformed into heavenly beauty, and the view of the horrible circle of their debased companionship and diabolical surroundings, must inspire them with unutterable self-abhorrence.

These torments, consisting largely of negative properties, indicating the soul's terrible realization of its failure, its loss and its disgrace, are called natural punishments, since by the connection and force of natural law they follow inevitably, without any intervention on the part of a personal judge or a direct infliction of penalty. They are the necessary results, the certain harvest,\* the full devel-

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\* Gal. vi. 7, 8.

opment of sin. But there are, besides, punishments that have no necessary, at least no apparent or immediate connection with men's sins—positive, judicial punitive inflictions, which God will visit upon transgressors apart from the natural consequences of their deeds. Even on this side of the final assize, instances of such special visitations of judgment are constantly witnessed.\* The consignment of the wicked to a place of torment belongs properly to this category. The judicial action of conscience belongs in part to the natural, in part to the positive punishments of sin. A representative and an executioner of the Supreme Judge holds his court and draws his sword in the very bosom of the soul, recalling all its long-forgotten opportunities, its stifled convictions, its disingenuous procrastinations, its insidious hatred of God and its hideous selfishness. Such activity of conscience can even here render life insupportable, and drive men into self-execration, as witness the case of Cain and Judas and thousands of others.† What will be its power when all masks are torn off, all disguises and devices are taken away, and men must hear its inexorable demands. We need not discuss the question of material or physical flames, when we ponder the fire which the recollection of our wrong-doing kindles and keeps burning in the soul, a fire forever supplying its own fuel. The white heat of the furnace, heated seven times more than it was wont, would be a solace compared with the unquenchable rage of remorse when the soul once comes to a full realization of its unholy relation to God, and the full consciousness of its being forever incapable of effecting any change. The revelation of God's wrath is not merely another form of divine mercy. It is a consuming fire.

This indestructible organ which God has set as his vicar in the soul, impressing upon man the guilt of sin and making him own the justness of its punishment, suggests also the inference that hell like heaven has its grades of woe, determined according to different individuals and also in the same individual according to the different stages of his further progression in sin. But the imagination recoils from the thought of men going on indefinitely multiplying their sins, and thus ever increasing their wretchedness, although in this life sin becomes the punishment of sin, and from various analogies

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\* Judges i. 7. Note the histories of Jacob, David, Haman, The Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, The Jews, etc., etc.

† Is. lvii. 1; Matt. xiv. 2; Gen. xlii. 21 f.



the conclusion is irresistible that the condition which men carry with them into hell will be subject to illimitable progression.

The sinner, furthermore, will be not only self-judged and self-punished but he will be condemned of God, the absolute judge of the living and the dead. Immediately, by his own judicial act, by a distinct personal revelation of his wrath, will he smite his enemies. The direct punitive judgment of God is the supreme import of future retribution. It is not mercy that confines sinners to hell, nor is the soul condemned and subjected to ineffable pains and torments for the sake of its own amendment. The life of probation God fixed in this world, the life of retribution he has fixed in the next. Nor do we adequately interpret the attribute of infinite justice by holding that the condemned are incarcerated or put under these dismal restraints simply for the protection of others and for the moral good of the universe. Men are assigned to the realm prepared for the devil and his angels because that is the fit place for them,\* because they have deserved such an award, because they have wickedly, incorrigibly offended against God, because God hates sin and is angry with the wicked, because God is just and can not deny himself.

These torments the confessors declare are to continue forever, "Sine fine crucientur," a doctrine already propounded in Art. II. In this declaration, as in all the others of this Article, the Confession re-affirms the faith of the Church Universal from the days of the apostles. Frightful as is the prospect of unspeakable, irremediable, everlasting woe, there is no doctrine on which the creed of the Church has been more explicit, unanimous and unwavering than this.†

The universality of the Church's consensus on this doctrine, induces of itself the conclusion that it is explicitly taught in the Scriptures, a conclusion which an examination of the divine oracles unquestionably confirms. It is in fact a common charge of the most intelligent opponents of the Bible that it teaches the doctrine of eternal misery. The terms employed to designate and describe the world of woe signify unmistakably the idea of duration without end. The crucial word *αιώνιος* receives from all the standard Greek lexi-

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\* Prov. xi. 21; Num. xxiii. 19.

† For an admirable summary of the historic belief in eternal punishment see Reimensnyder's "Doom Eternal."

cographers the interpretation of duration without end, perpetual, never-ceasing, eternal, everlasting, for ever. The term occurs seventy-one times in the New Testament, there being in no instance any proof or probability of it implying limited duration. It is applied to the absolute God, to the permanence of his kingdom, to the perpetuity of the Gospel, to the blessedness of the saints. A parallel of the latter with the misery of the damned is drawn in the same passage and expressed by the same term, in such a way that it is out of the question to assign the idea of eternity to the one and of limited duration to the other.\* Eternal pain and eternal life are set over against each other. "The absolute idea of eternity in regard to the punishment of hell is not to be got rid of by a toning down of the word *αἰώνιος*, but is to be regarded as exegetically established in this passage by the opposed *ζωὴν αἰώνιον*."† The Scriptures admit of no other deduction than that the sentence of the damned is irreversible and its enforcement absolutely interminable.‡ And in proportion as men repudiate this doctrine they are found qualifying their submission to the Bible as an infallible and authoritative standard of faith and life.

Though staggering under its contemplation, reason offers no valid objections to this doctrine of Revelation. The idea of the infinite perpetuity of personal suffering may at first sight seem inconsistent with the fathomless mercy of God, yet no grounds can be urged against it which might not be offered with equal force against the existence of evil and suffering in the present world. Not the endless duration of evil, but the origin of it under the reign of infinite goodness, is the appalling problem of the universe. Archbishop Whateley agreed to "undertake to explain to any one the final condemnation of the wicked, if he will explain the existence of the wicked."§ If the presence of sin and pain are not incompatible with the divine benevolence in this world, how can their endless continuance be inconsistent with it? If sin and suffering are so connected here that they who are guilty of the former cannot possibly escape the latter, notwithstanding repentance, pardon and reformation, what hope is there that any will cease from suffering as long as they con-

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\* Matt. xxv. 46, cf. 41.

† Meyer in loco. Matt. iii. 12, xviii. 8, cf. *προκαίρα*, 2 Cor. iv. 18.

‡ Luke xvi. 26; Rev. xiv. 11, xxii. 11, Matt. xii. 32.

§ "Future State."

tinue in sin, and what is to keep men from sinning in the realm of the damned, when no divine or human restraints could deter them from evil-doing here? For it is not the infliction of eternal pains for temporal sins that confronts us, but, in the first place, the incurability of a condition brought about by man's own guilt, and secondly, the confirmed hopelessness of that condition in the future world by the sinner's inexorable continuance in his opposition to God's will. *Non cessante peccato nequit cessare pœna.*

Nor can it be shown that this awful doctrine is irreconcilable with any of the divine perfections. We can only judge of the divine attributes and of what is compatible with them by the revelation of their exercise in the past. It did not seem good to supreme wisdom to interpose against the entrance of evil into the world, but angels and men were suffered to fall and to incur dire penalties. Whence then arises any presumption that the immutable Judge is likely by a sovereign act of his will to put an end to evil in the hereafter? If it is proper in his sight to destroy it, why not destroy it now? Had good men this power they would probably exercise it at once. An earthly father would, if it were possible, keep out or put out evil from his house. God does not. Man's notions, man's ways, especially the desires of guilty souls, are no standard for him. We admit in other things the incomprehensibility of his doings, so reason also here properly bows before the inscrutable judgment of God.\*

So far as it raises opposition to this doctrine it is always upon premises that are unsound and incompatible with the facts. It underestimates the fearful import of sin, and along with that error disparages the inflexible righteousness of God. It overlooks the infinite hatred of evil which must dwell in the heart of the Holy One. It fails to recognize that the violation of God's law involves a degree of guilt for which we have no measurement. Nor do the objections raised against eternal punishment take into account the transcendent glory and inconceivable cost of the salvation freely offered to sinners, and the absolute culpability of its contemptuous rejection. These facts rightly considered, can anything short of endless retribution, the abiding wrath of God, be deemed an adequate punishment? Would anything short of this do justice to the unutterable seriousness of impenitent obduracy? Surely souls can-

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\* Gen. xviii. 25; Job xi. 7; Rom. xi. 33 f.

not for ever palter with the holiness of God, nor spurn for ever that grace which while it cannot be exhausted can just as little be mocked.

But may not the lost be ultimately recovered to God? Will not those excruciating torments crush their hard and stubborn will? Will not the terrific realization of their guilt and wretchedness force from the most intractable the cry for mercy? Suffering is not proverbial for such effects in this life. It hardened Pharaoh instead of subduing him. The most bitter experiences have little power to restrain wickedness. Burning regrets are rarely of any avail in effecting reformation or drawing men to God. Terror has never transformed a fiend into a saint. The culprit respited on the gallows has seldom distinguished himself by a career of morality and obedience to law. Men indeed are not saved by punishment, but by divine grace. The Gospel of wretchedness, "the basement Gospel under the world and after the grave" is not likely to effect salvation where the message of peace and good will has failed. Suffering, so far from moving the mind to decision, really disqualifies it, and even disposes men to blaspheme the God of heaven for their wretchedness.\*

"Pain is force, necessity, a grinding stress of absolutism, which may do something in breaking down a will, but never was known to lift up a will out of weakness and evil, or ennoble it in the liberty and free ascension of good. Breaking down a will too, let it be observed, is not conversion, but catastrophe, death—just what is the undergirding import and reality of the second death."† Thus viewed psychologically hell is the last place where one could look for genuine contrition and conversion, and when viewed soteriologically there arises not the shadow of a hope that God will there graciously and effectually interpose for salvation. Certainly no stronger considerations can be offered than are now offered to effect the sinner's restoration to God. As we cannot conceive of more forcible appeals either to men's hopes or fears, to their reason, their heart and their conscience, than such as are being constantly enforced upon them now, so neither can we entertain the thought that God may have in reserve some more potent saving agency than those now acting upon men's minds, some extraordinary de-

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\* Rev. xvii. 11.

† Bushnell, Sermons on Living Subjects, "A single trial better than many."

vice that can span the now impassable gulf which yawns between the lake of fire and the river of life.

The divine resources for salvation may not be exhausted, yet if there are more effective methods we must ask why God does not employ them now? Every hope of salvation beyond the grave discredits the plan of salvation now in force. It says in effect that God is not doing the best for us now—that man is not alone responsible if he dies unredeemed. It disparages the present means of grace. Man can do better in the next world, more efficacious remedies await the sinner there. It is better to die in your sins, for the saving forces in hell make salvation there absolutely certain. But even granted that more powerful incitements coming from without should combine with the woeful experiences of the lost to effect a moral change, all inward conditions for such a result will be wanting. Man will be a moral bankrupt. Those higher sensibilities which in life offered a basis for the action of divine grace, will have been consumed by long continuance in sin. The nobler affinities are burnt out. Death, the second death, has quenched the last sparks on which a new life might have been kindled.

Condemned sinners will not begin that world where they began this, with boundless capacity for moral growth; but that sphere of existence will open where this one closes, with all the better endowments blasted, squandered, extinguished. It is the nature of moral character to become more and more fixed and unchangeable the longer men continue in a certain course. What was once dependent on choice becomes gradually as firm and unalterable as fate. The elements of good accordingly, which exercised at the proper time, might have developed into righteous living, will through unholy indifference and moral violence lose all vitality and therefore all possibility of action. Hence, though Christ were again to be offered in hell, even crucified afresh, and the Holy Ghost should be there to apply redemption to the lost, their spiritual exhaustion must render them incapable of its acceptance.

Must then divine love ultimately confess itself defeated by the obduracy of the sinner? Will it not as a last resort have recourse to omnipotence and by resistless force rescue men from eternal sin and suffering? This would still more manifestly defeat the eternal purpose of love in the creation and the redemption of individual personal beings. That purpose can have contemplated nothing less



than their everlasting blessedness in the love and fellowship of God. Such blessedness is however impossible without holiness,\* and holiness cannot be forced upon a free creature without or against his own will—not even by Omnipotence. Blessed unholiness and enforced sanctification are alike unthinkable. Blessedness and holiness have their province in the sphere of moral freedom and personality. The annihilation of this freedom, the crushing out of man's personality, cannot be the ultimate design of the love that gave him being, that hung bleeding for him on Calvary. That is more clearly irreconcilable with it than eternal damnation.†

The Scripture passages sometimes cited in defence of restorationism‡ have reference either to the universality of grace in its provision, or they relate to the totality of those who are God's children and who become such subjectively through faith;§ or they point to the universality of the homage and honor which both friend and foe will at last render to God. And if after this explanation there still remain in single and mysterious utterances unsolved difficulties, their proper interpretation cannot be in conflict with the clear and oft repeated declarations of the Lord and his apostles.

The concrete cases of damnation brought to our view give no support to the theory of restoration. Not a gleam of hope nor a ray of repentance is discernible in the rich man in hell, and although the fallen angels tremble and writhe in pain they continue still to be devils.|| The present life is decisive forever. Time is the season of testing and of grace. Eternity is the state of fixedness and destiny. It may seem hard that no second trial is to be allowed, but the severity of the case does not alter its truth, though it does give infinite importance to the present life. Nor is it quite impossible to demonstrate that a second probation, were it even attainable, is not at all desirable. The world's experience shows that too much trial diminishes rather than increases the chances of a good result, that one trial is better than many. God clearly gives men only one chance for this life, the period of youth. Failure in that is final in

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\* Heb. xii. 14.

† Thomasius, *Christi Person u. Werk*.

‡ Acts iii. 21; Rom. v. 18 f, xi. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 28; Phil. ii. 10 f; Rev. v. 13, 14.

§ John iii. 16, 36; Gal. iii. 22.

|| James ii. 19.

its decision for every one. Thus he gives them one chance for eternity, and when the result of this shall be revealed it will be found a finality.\*

Finally, it has been proposed to replace this horrible doctrine of the infinity of suffering by the ultimate annihilation of the wicked. The life forces must finally be so worn out by their unrelenting opposition to God and the inexorable continuance and effect of their sufferings, that being itself will at last be dissolved and sink away into the void abyss of non-existence. Under the terrible annealing of ages, the vital principle advances to absolute extinction.

Such a doctrine, if the destructibility of personal spiritual being is at all conceivable, is doubtless less repulsive and frightful to man than the idea of an absolutely interminable continuance of evil and suffering; but its greater attractiveness does not render it more probable. The apparent simplicity of this solution of the world-problem awakens an involuntary suspicion. It makes no account of the eternal perfections and purposes of God which are here the determining element. Such annihilation would be a boon to the damned sufferers. The prospect of such an escape from their punishment would be ineffable solace to their weary anguish. It is the very relief which according to Scripture, the wicked sigh for in their torments.† They would thus escape from the hand of an offended God and from the grip of divine justice. They would after all get the better of the divine government, like the condemned murderer who through suicide bids defiance to the power that holds him in its grasp and is about to execute its penalties.

It is not the province of man's moral freedom to choose between existence and non-existence, but in that existence, which is God's creation, to make his choice between life and death, between the normal elevation of his being to communion with God in glory and virtue, or its degradation to infinite guilt and woe as the negative result of having missed the end of his being.

Hell, then, is not the realm of hope, but the prison of despair. As revelation throws not a ray of mercy into this outer darkness, so reason also has discovered no way of escape. It is the blackness of darkness forever. If the mind recoils from such a doctrine, let it be

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\* This subject is forcibly treated in Bushnell's sermon "A single trial better than many."

† Rev. vi. 16.

remembered that men sin from choice, and persist in their choice despite the voice of Sinai and the groans of Calvary. *Ut Deus non est causa peccati, ita etiam non est causa damnationis, sed unica causa damnationis est peccatum.\**

## II. WHAT THE CONFESSORS CONDEMN.

1. "They condemn the Anabaptists, who teach that the punishment of damned men and devils will have an end." They mean to be understood upon this point of endless woe following unrepented sin. So convinced were they of this truth, and so alive to the subtle and specious attempts to exclude it from the Scriptures, that, not content with its thetical statement here and in Article II, they solemnly repeat it in its antithetical form, and put their anathema upon the Anabaptist fanatics who were then spreading the heresy that the pains of hell will cease, and with whom to their abhorrence the Reformers, upon their arrival at Augsburg, discovered that Eck was confounding them on this point. In harmony with the œcumenical faith of the Church, the Reformers believed the judgment of the Parousia to be a finality, a fixed, irrevocable, eternal separation between the good and evil. The sentence of the Judge they viewed as a *terminus peremptorius* for human probation, the utmost limit beyond which change and conversion, grace and opportunity, are no longer possible.

It was the misconception of this truth that underlay Origen's theory of restoration. The unconverted, he held, passed from one world into another, as from one school to another, until their conversion by these repeated trials is finally attained. This involves "an unlimited and illimitable series of worlds and of world developments," but such a view conflicts with the Christian doctrine of the Parousia as absolutely decisive, conclusive and final, so that "after it no mention can be made of history and historical progress, but only of life and existence in a fixed and undisturbed eternity."† That

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\* Form. Conc. For an interesting exhibit of the apparent contradictions on this subject, both in Scripture and in human thought, see Martensen, §§ 283-289. *Theological* considerations, he holds, point to the doctrine of ultimate universal salvation; *Anthropological* premises to the dark goal of eternal damnation. This supposed antinomy he pronounces the *crux* of thought, which it is impossible for the Church to solve while she remains in the stream of time and the course of development.

† Martensen.

this Origenistic heresy\* was a favorite tenet of leading Anabaptists is a well-attested historical fact. They reasoned, not from the Scriptures but from their conceptions of God, that the damned, including Satan and his angels, will ultimately have salvation. God, who is love, cannot be otherwise than gracious even in his wrath. He must at last show mercy to all, and the punishments he imposes can only be designed as means to ultimate reformation.† Christ may not be able to save them, it was taught, but he will assign them to the Father who is the everlasting fire, (!) the consuming fire. He can and will save the devil and you together. And further, whoever is with God is saved. But nothing can be forever separated from God, hence all the damned and devils must finally come to God and be saved.

Such teachings are entirely consistent with the general character of this monstrous Anabaptist fanaticism. Along with their Socinian tendencies on the Trinity and the person of Christ, and their Pelagian extenuation of the essential nature of sin, their speculations on future retribution come directly into conflict with both the Christian consciousness and the explicit declarations of Scripture.‡

2. "They condemn also others who are now disseminating the Judaizing notions that anterior to the resurrection, the righteous will possess the government of the world, the wicked being everywhere destroyed."

That this second *damnant* is likewise aimed at the Anabaptists is clear from historical data. Their infernal theocracy of blood and lust had, it is true, not yet been set up at Münster, but to the keen eye of the Reformers it was evident whither such madness was drifting. Even before the arrival of the Zwickau prophets at Wittenberg in 1521, Carlstadt had been agitating a new theocracy to be established by force. He was accordingly ready for the revelations which had been vouchsafed to the Zwickauers, requiring the overthrow of the whole existing order of things, the destruction of the wicked princes then reigning and the enthronement of the saints in their place, with the supreme power reserved to Storch, who under the pretence of a divine commission chose twelve apostles and twenty-two disciples for his theocratic court.§ Somewhat later the noto-

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\*The *Variata* substitutes *Origenistas* for *Anabaptistas*.

† Heberle, *Stud. u. Krit.*, 1851, pp. 817 ff, 827.

‡ Plitt, *Einleitung*, II., 418, 419.

§ Dorner, *Prot. Theol. I.*, 132 f.

rious Münzer had gone into Thuringia, there with his sword of Gideon to organize upon the ruins of church and state, Christ's visible kingdom upon earth—a kingdom based upon equality and communism, and composed exclusively of saints, who being under divine inspiration have no need of government by the magistracy. The saints alone, it was maintained, have a true right in property, and these Anabaptists were the saints. To unbelievers nothing is due but judgment. Civil rulers, unless they belong to the elect, possess no authority. They must join the prophet's covenant or be slain, for he was chosen and inspired to set up the kingdom of God on earth, and obedience to him in the destruction of the non-elect is their first duty. This is the work of the angels in the day of judgment, but by the angels is to be understood God's messengers, and by the day of judgment the present crisis. The wicked are now to be hurled from their seats of power, and the humble, the pious, to be exalted in their place.

"These thoughts of destruction may be summed up in this, that Münzer seeks to annihilate all the principles of human order which belong to the first creation, in order to set in its place a second creation, pretendedly divine, but in reality murderous."\* In this judgment which under the lead of these inspired prophets is to uproot the wicked, the elect only are to be spared. And these will henceforth enjoy a blissful existence upon earth, life without law, procreation without marriage, holy offspring without sinful carnal lusts, a reign of sublime voluptuousness, in which God's holy and perfect children no longer require the Scriptures.† All is external, worldly, sensuous. This reign of the saints is in the sphere of natural life. "Anterior to the resurrection" they are to be relieved from the cross and tribulation, and to ride proudly and victoriously through the world, which everywhere lays its carnal treasures and pleasures at their feet.

The second error condemned had accordingly sprung up from the same rank soil as the first. These lawless fanatics were undermining civil government as well as Christian doctrine. They radically opposed all natural human ordinances, and aimed at supplanting them with theocratic institutions. Only the exclusively divine shall prevail from henceforth, and whatever is not in harmony with this must be extirpated by the avenging sword of these saints, who

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\* Dorner I., 138.

† Menius. Quoted in Plitt's *Einleitung*.



alone constitute the true Church, the divine kingdom. Such teachings and their practical and bloody inauguration by the usurpation of political power were "eagerly seized upon by the enemies of the Reformation as so many proofs that it taught men to reject all authority, and thus incited to disobedience and rebellion against the temporal as well as the spiritual powers."\*

To be held responsible for all the madness and anarchy which these revolutionists had spread like a prairie fire throughout Germany, was one of the severest trials to which the Reformation was subjected. Its supporters could not, therefore, in all wisdom and duty, fail, when before the bar of the empire, to disavow the revolting and seditious tenets with which, under the insidious and diabolical plea of direct inspiration, these men threatened the overthrow of all civil and social order. Hence, immediately upon the condemnation of their error regarding the period after the judgment, they denounce their no less dangerous error relative to the period preceding the judgment of the last day.

The language of the *Variata* leaves no doubt as to the aim of this second *damnant*. During the ten years which intervened between the presentation of the Confession and the date of the *Variata*, the Chiliastic dreams of the Anabaptists had developed the most hideous concrete reality at Münster. There Bockeldson had been proclaimed King of Zion and Lord of the whole earth, and surrounding himself with a grotesque and disgusting court, appointing twelve dukes as vicegerents over his leveling and communistic kingdom, he had proceeded, by means of robbery, murder and polygamy, and in the name of revelation, to affect the realization of Christ's predicted reign of a thousand years. Accordingly, instead of an indefinite "alios," Melancthon, in 1540, makes the Confession explicitly "Condemn the ANABAPTISTS, who now scatter Jewish opinions, and imagine that before the resurrection," etc. \* \* "For we know that, since the godly ought to obey the magistrates that now are, they must not seize their power from them or overthrow governments by sedition, because Paul enjoineeth: 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers' (Rom. xiii. 1). We know also that the Church in this life is subject to the cross, and shall not be glorified until after this life. \* \* Therefore, we utterly condemn and detest the folly and diabolical madness of the Anabaptists."†

\* Gieseler, N. Y. Ed., Vol. IV., 112-122.

† See also Melancthon's *De furor. et delir. Anabapt.*, and Luther on Ps. xc.

The error condemned possesses, therefore, an unmistakable character, clearly defined by the clause in the German text: "Judaizing notions, which are *even now mooted*," and externally illustrated by the terrible events of contemporaneous history. The times in which this condemnation was uttered are decisive of its intent and application. The grammatico-historical method is the only safe and honest means for the interpretation of the Confession, as well as of the Bible, and that method reveals very distinctly the true inwardness of the "Jewish opinions" repudiated by the Confessors. That this repudiation was intended as a club for smiting all who find Millenarian prophecies in the Bible, will hardly be maintained by any who have carefully examined the language employed by the Confession and who have studied the history of the times which produced it. "The Confession itself owes its establishment and development entirely to circumstances of a practical and historic nature."\*

These teachings are called "Judaizing notions" because they partake of the general character of the Jewish anticipations of a secular kingdom, consisting of and ruled by God's people. They confound the political sovereignty of this world with God's spiritual and eternal kingdom. A state, in the form of a theocracy, governed by direct revelation, is to take the place of a civil polity. The saints are to rule, *regnum mundi occupaturi sint*, to enjoy, under Christ, political sovereignty and a reign of vulgar power, sensuous glory and voluptuous indulgence, from the day of judgment then at hand to the end of the world.

The Anabaptist leaders are known likewise to have stood in close connection with the Jews, to have pursued Hebrew studies under them, and to have been inoculated by them with unsoundness on the Church's doctrine of the Trinity. It is claimed, too, that in the midst of the commotions of that age, the Jews were quite active in expressing among the excited masses their own hopes of future triumph, and of the government of the world under their Messianic king. It is therefore altogether probable that the Anabaptists largely imbibed from these their materialistic, carnal conceptions of the millennial reign. They recognized too by their interpretations of Scripture that Israel still remained God's people, and that a glor-

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\* Cf. Judgment of the Dorpat Faculty, *Evang. Review*, Vol. XIX., p. 236, 250 f.

ious future awaited them, and they accordingly, unlike the Reformers, labored zealously for their conversion ere the imminent close of the dispensation of grace. It was doubtless also their study of the Old Testament, for which the more fanatical Anabaptists had a special predilection, that moulded in great part their conceptions of the character of this new era about to be ushered in. They are credited with no small measure of ability in the investigation of the prophetic Scriptures. "Hetzer, Cellarius, and Denk would be entitled to great honor for their studies of the prophets had they not been led, by their delusive premises, from one misconception to another. Their minds, pre-occupied with the expectation of a sensuous, visible kingdom over which they and their kind were to rule, the teachings of the Scriptures had of course to be harmonized with their prepossessions, and thus even made to confirm their error.\*

### III. WHAT THEY COMMITTED TO INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND FUTURE ELUCIDATION.

It is not the design of Confessions to exhaust the contents of revelation, or to present a finished code of doctrine. Their subject matter does not properly consist in speculative opinions nor in doctrinal problems that lie remote from the centre of revelation, but in the obvious saving truths of the Gospel, to the acknowledgment of which the Church has been brought by the Holy Ghost, and which she holds as clearly and firmly established. The creed is the landmark of truth which the Church has at any stage fully attained, the declaration of what accords with her experience and what is essential to her life, along with the refutation of such errors as have arisen in opposition to her faith. "The Confessions only present to the light of day the contest \* \* \* through which every Christian heart is passing."† Practical and historical issues constitute the true Confessional sphere.‡ The Confessors rightly distinguished between the assured faith of the Church and a system of theology. Their personal absorption in the practical interests of salvation gave them indeed peculiar qualifications for drawing up a Confession, which is the most perfect embodiment of the saving truths of the Gospel ever put forth. What they had fully received

\* Plitt, Einleitung.

† Dr. Jacobs, Luth. Quarterly, Vol. XI. p. 20.

‡ See the Prefaces to Augs. Conf., Smal. Art. and Form. Conc., and Rudelbach, Einleitung, 114.

they have as fully given, but they did not propose to "perplex consciences with inexplicable labyrinths,"\* nor to exempt the Church after them from zealously searching for the treasures of truth yet to be drawn from God's holy word.

In view of all the circumstances of the time, it may be regarded as providential that the Confessors ventured no further in the definition of eschatological doctrines. Prof. Plitt† points to a number of considerations which reveal to what extent they were incapacitated for the confessional presentation of correct and complete views in this sphere. He even suggests that their attempts to advance beyond the limits they observed, might have subsequently imposed upon the Church the necessity of convicting the Confession of error.

Engrossed by the momentous practical concerns of the hour, they gave little attention to the historic evolution of redemption up to its culmination in Christ, and showed as little appreciation of that course of its development which was still to be experienced. They made it their supreme task to recall the Church to the personal appropriation of the salvation already accomplished and completed in Christ. Their vision of the future was in fact obscured by their belief that the last times were at hand, that anti-Christ had already appeared in the papacy, and that the judgment was imminent, while their sense of historical development was wholly blunted by the anomalous condition of the Romish hierarchy. Luther, furthermore, questioned the canonicity of the Apocalypse, and actually disparaged prophecy in general, holding it as ministering to inordinate curiosity more than to saving faith. Again, with all their advance in scientific exegesis, the Reformers were still somewhat fettered by the allegorical method which spiritualizes all sensuous reality and thereby dissipates all history. Finally, Luther himself entertained a singular and ever-growing aversion to the Jews, holding them to be forever cast off and therefore beyond the prospect of ever again holding a place in the history of redemption. A passage in one of his Church Postils declares, indeed, that the words of Scripture concerning Israel's conversion have not yet been fulfilled, yet it is well known that he generally regarded these prophecies as fulfilled in the spiritual Israel. This doubtless accounts for the omission of the above passage in editions of the Church Postils after his death. Under such circumstances a proper insight into the historic stages

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\* Melanch. to Brentz.

† Einleitung, II., 415-417.



of the final consummation was out of the question, and the Confession, like the œcumenical creeds and all the subsequent Lutheran symbols, is restricted to that outline of the events and purposes of the Parousia, which are most clearly and unmistakably attested by the Scriptures. This suffices for the faith of the Church, but it does not exhaust the contents of revelation on the *NOVISSIMA*.

Among the non-confessional doctrines which are involved in our Article but left as open questions; may be mentioned:

1. *The duration of the day of judgment.*
2. *The conversion of Israel.*
3. *The two-fold resurrection.*
4. *The millennium.*

1. The answer to the first furnishes in great part the key for the solution of the other remote and profound problems. Does the judgment follow instantaneously upon the Parousia, and are all its tremendous occurrences to coincide in a single scene? Is the final consummation to be compassed within an ordinary day, the universal transition from time to eternity to be effected suddenly, by one momentary stroke? Or is the day of judgment, like a prophetic day or a creative æon, an extended, indefinite period, as interpreted already by Augustine,\* a day embracing a progressive series, a vast reach of successive scenes separated from each other by wide undefined intervals?

If the dogmaticians are correct in representing the second advent, the general resurrection, the final judgment and the end of the world "as immediately united," succeeding each other "without an interval of time,"† then it follows inevitably that from the moment of our Lord's appearance the roll of ages will have ceased and all earthly creature development will have issued in a fixed eternity. And if they have any Scripture warrant for this assumption, their conclusion that "before the completion of the judgment no earthly kingdom, and life abounding, etc., etc., is to be expected," becomes of course irrefutable.

But what if there be *χρόνοι καὶ καιροὶ* embraced in that momentous day? Is it not the predominant purport of our Lord's second com-

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\* "Ultimam diem, i. e. novissimum tempus," De Civ. Dei, XX. I, Hagenbach, Hist. Doct., Vol. I., 374.

† Quenstedt, IV., 649. Mel. Loci de regno Christi, Gerhard XX., 110 ff.



ing to occupy his realm, to perfect his kingdom, and to consummate his reign? His Parousia most obviously "includes the idea of a permanent abiding from that coming onwards."\* Nor dare we forget, as the last stage of God's kingdom breaks into view, that every other stage has been characterized by the law of extended development. We have no ground for supposing that this principle of the divine action will be abandoned until the very last act of the last scene shall have been reached, when the Son shall have subdued all things and God will be all in all.† To the vision of faith these events of the future may appear as one mighty, complex scene, all comprehended in a single, awful catastrophe, which marks the transition from the temporal to the eternal. They are events as intimately related to each other as they are in character distinct from all that preceded them, and at first view the Scriptures may seem so to group them as if they constituted one definitive tableau of human history. Yet this does not preclude their occurrence in the form of prolonged series and successive stages. The method pursued by the prophets, alike in the Old Testament and in the New, offers here a most instructive guide. They employ uniformly a perspective by which great events which in point of time are widely separated are drawn into one field of view. Overlooking intermediate points which do not affect the general prospect, they present in one vast reach of vision the successive phenomena which stretch over unmeasured ages. It is thus that the first and the second advents of the Lord, the Incarnation and the Parousia, salvation and judgment, are in the Old Testament continually blended into one scene. The Scribes were led into their prodigious error respecting the Messianic kingdom, by their failure to recognize this prophetic principle and the fact of intervening stages. They could discover no signs of the overwhelming triumph and glory which, according to the prophets, were to signalize the advent of Zion's king. Our Lord in his prophecies uses the same perspective, so uniting the scene of the final judgment with the near prospect of the overthrow of Jerusalem and the rapid progress of his kingdom upon its ruins, that even yet exegesis has great perplexity in separating what applies peculiarly to the destruction of his Jewish enemies, and what is reserved for fulfilment in the eventual destruction of the world.

What prophecy groups into a single scene like a range of, distant

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\* Ewald.

† 1 Cor. xv. 26-28.

mountains, history unfolds as a succession of events widely removed from each other. The recognition of this inspired method gives the true interpretation of those great prophecies whose fulfilment remains to be realized. To sweep all these mighty occurrences of the final era into the brief compass of a single day is to make a very summary, not to say a profane, disposal of them. We have not so learned the Scriptures. Dazzling as is the light reflected from that resplendent day, the cross-lights of the past falling upon it enable us to distinguish in some degree the individual objects, and to point out their progressive unfoldings. The coming of the Lord constitutes a dispensation. "In the Gospel-Apostolic description of one day of judgment there is collectively and plastically comprehended that which extends through different periods and phases."\* What ages may be embraced in that aeonic day, or by what chronometer they shall be reckoned, remains unrevealed. Yet in analogy with every other day, it will have its morn and its eve. It will be ushered in with the Parousia of the Lord for the triumphant establishment of his kingdom, it will close with the delivering of the kingdom to the Father. We distinguish between the preliminary goal and the ultimate goal of history. Certainly the glorious assumption of the kingdom and its surrender to the Father are two distinct acts, with an interval of undefined duration between them.

2. *The conversion of Israel* falls within the purview of this article, although passed over in silence by the Confessors, who with harsh prejudices against the Jews recognized no place for them in the Church's future.

Some of the dogmaticians held that their general conversion would take place before the judgment, or about the time of the Parousia, but by the great majority this hope is rejected.† We cannot so venerate these great teachers as to place them above the Scriptures. As certainly as the gifts and calling of God are without repentance‡ the conversion of Israel, as a people, is an event that must yet come, an event which is destined to secure for them again that glorious ascendancy in redemptive history and in redeemed humanity, to which they were from the beginning ordained.§'

The Church which is to compass the conversion of all nations

\* Van Oosterzee, Ps. xc. 4; 2 Peter iii. 8.

† With what logic and exegesis! See Schmid. 659.

‡ Rom. xi. 29.

§ Matt. xix. 28, 30; Rev. vii. 1-8, 9.

will not ultimately fail with that favored people to whom the glad tidings were first given. Rejected by their kinsmen, the Apostles turned away to the Gentiles; yet they continued to abound in prayer and hope for their salvation,\* and explicitly predicted their eventual submission to the King whom they had pierced.

Not as sporadic individuals, but as a body shall they be saved.† Their glorious restoration will be coëxtensive with their blindness, their pardon will be commensurate with their unbelief. "All Israel shall be saved" is the language of the Apostle to the Gentiles, who so far from cherishing their delusive hopes in regard to a national Messiah and their exclusive relations to him, periled his life in opposing this error. Blindness in part has indeed happened unto Israel, but not forever—only till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. Then will the Deliverer appear to turn away ungodliness from Jacob.‡ Scattered, peeled and persecuted for ages, their house is not to be forever desolate. Jerusalem, the centre and type of their hopes, is not to be evermore trodden under the feet of the nations, but only until the time of the nations be fulfilled. Then, after the *πλήρωμα* of the Gentiles, who received the Gospel earlier because of its rejection by the chosen people, their day will have come, their times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.§ All these predictions indicate the close connection between the conversion of Israel and the coming of the Lord. The preliminary condition of Israel's salvation is, according to both Christ and Paul, the relatively completed work of the Gospel among the nations, which in turn is uniformly represented as a sign of the end. Their sins will be blotted out, and their refreshing from the Lord will take place at the reappearance among them of Jesus Christ, whom the heavens have in the meanwhile received until the times of restitution.|| They shall not see him until they welcome him coming in the name of the Lord.¶ Thus, as with every other great error, a profound truth underlies the delusion which has so long misled the Jews. The error intermingled with the truth was shared in part by the most enlightened Jews who formed the innermost circle of the disciples. Even on the summit of Olivet they ask the risen Lord once more whether now Israel

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\* Rom. x. 11.

† Rom. xi. 29, 32.

‡ Rom. xi. 25 f.

§ Matt. xxiii. 39; Luk. xxi. 24; Acts iii. 19-21.

|| Acts iii. 21.

¶ Matt. xxiii. 39.

is to have its true place in the kingdom, and to realize its divinely kindled hopes. And the reply, let it be remembered, is not a reproof of such expectations in point of fact. It merely dispels their notions in regard to the time fixed for the restoration of the kingdom to Israel.

A most striking confirmation of these prospects is found in the marvelous preservation of that nation, remaining united in its universal dispersion, holding to-day the foremost place in many of the higher walks of life, and still in a measure as of old distinguished by the most solid virtues. While conversely, these prospects opened up to us in revelation, constitute the only solution to the problem of the Jewish nation, the most remarkable in the world's history. They make known "the glorious end for which this people has been through so many successive ages preserved as by miracle, and kept distinct from all other nations."

3. *The two-fold resurrection.* The prophetic day inaugurated by the coming of the Lord includes the period of the resurrection of the dead. It is on the last day that the dead will be raised. Of the "dead in Christ" it is explicitly testified that they shall rise immediately upon the advent.\*

According to the popular and traditional idea, which our dogmatists also stoutly maintain, the resurrection of all the dead will be simultaneous, the saints and the wicked will rise together. This theory has neither Scripture nor analogy for its support. Their condition separating the two divisions by an impassable gulf, what grounds exist for the expectation that their resurrection will coincide in time? The perspective of prophecy may seem to group them together in one field of vision, but as noted above, this is done in the case of events widely different and occurring at long intervals. Prophecy appears to view every future catastrophe as the final goal, and it ordinarily recognizes no distinction and no differences of time between events which in their import and occurrence are remote from each other. In respect of the resurrection, however, it clearly foreshadows a chronological order, a succession of events separated by an undefined interval. When St. Paul† adduces the resurrection of Christ in proof of the resurrection of the dead, and brings into connection with the latter the end as signalized by his giving up the kingdom to God the Father, he declares that these events are to

\* John vi. 40, 54; xi. 26; 1 Thess. iv. 13-16.

† 1 Cor. xv. 23 f.



happen successively, each in its own order, *εν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι*. The first *τάγμα* is the resurrection of Christ as *ἀπαρχή*, the second, *ἐπειτα*, the resurrection of those that are Christ's at his coming, two events not only distinct from each other but separated by an interval of ages. Then, *εἰτα*, comes the third *τάγμα*, the end. This ultimate event must accordingly be removed in point of time from the resurrection of those that are Christ's, whose rising coincides with the Parousia. And inasmuch as long intermediate ages separate Christ's resurrection from that of his saints, the parallel drawn by the apostle requires a similar interval between the second and the third events. The last coincides with the final goal, the second synchronizes with the preliminary goal.

Let it be noted, too, that in this classic chapter on the resurrection, the awakening of the wicked is not even alluded to. Again, Paul expresses his deep concern to have part in the resurrection,\* a solicitude altogether meaningless and superfluous if he had the conviction that absolutely all would rise together. Finally, our Lord's allusion to "the resurrection of the just"† clearly points to and confirms this doctrine of a two-fold rising. The hieroglyphical utterances of the Apocalypse‡ accordingly do not constitute a new or unique chapter in inspiration, by their distinction of the resurrection of those who are removed beyond the power of the second death, from the subsequent universal resurrection. Pauline and Johannean theology are in entire accord here, both having gained their keynote from the Lord himself.§

4. *The millennial reign.* That the Church is to have a period of great triumph before the world's final course is run, is one of the clearest deductions from Holy Scripture, and one of the profoundest convictions of the Christian consciousness. While this hope has in its Jewish and sensuous forms stimulated all manner of extravagances and fanaticism, rendering the very name chiliasm to many a term of derision, yet hidden under this gross and many-colored shell there is doubtless imbedded, "a real pearl of Christian truth and knowledge," || the pledge of a sublime inheritance.

\* Phil. iii. 11, 21.

† Luke xiv. 14.

‡ Rev. xx. 4, 5, 12 ff.

§ On the support which the doctrine of a two-fold resurrection derives from the distinction between the expressions *ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν* and *αν. εκ νεκρῶν*, Matt. xvii. 8; Mk. ix. 9, 10, xii. 25; Luke xx. 35; 1 Cor. xv. 12, 20, etc. etc. See Olshausen's Comment., Vol. ii. 183.

|| Lange.



The Lutheran Church rejects the chiliasm *crassus* which exhibited its grossest forms during the Reformation, yet she has never failed to recognize the idea which underlies chiliasm, "the idea of a pre-eminently blooming time for the Church before the final consummation."\* The dogmaticians, notwithstanding their repudiation of manifold forms which this doctrine has assumed, had yet to attempt some solution of the thousand years, and making them arithmetically literal they presented the extraordinary theory that the millenium extended from the time of Constantine the Great, when the persecutions ceased, to "the year 1300, about which time Satan being again released aroused the Ottoman family, under which Gog and Magog, *i. e.* the Turkish Empire, acquired the greatest strength and the Saracen race raged against the Church with a greater effort than before, etc."† Surely when the pillars of Lutheran orthodoxy thus infringe Art. XVII. which condemns such as place the millennial period *before* the resurrection, those who hope for a glorious visible reign of Christ and his saints *after* the resurrection, cannot be charged with transgressing the bounds of the Confession.

But if the dogmaticians must be followed as the infallible expounders of the Lutheran Symbols, let any one receive the confessional doctrine that the Papacy is Anti-Christ, and put underneath it their theory of the millennium extending from the fourth to the fourteenth century, during which period the papacy attained the height of its power. If from this combination of reformers and dogmaticians it follows inevitably that the millenium represents the thousand years' reign, not of Christ, but of Anti-Christ, the dilemma will afford a sovereign test of men's capacity for swallowing camels.

Apart from the numerous prophecies both of the Old and the New Testaments,‡ a glorious manifestation and triumph of the Church upon earth is to be looked for on internal grounds. The highest good, the eternally beautiful, the essentially true, must yet have their proper recognition in a world where they have so long been despised. The fitness of things demands that the "via crucis" of redeemed humanity shall eventually shine as the "via lucis," that the crown of thorns shall be replaced by the royal diadem on the Church's brow. The loftiest idea of Christianity must have its

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\* Martensen.

† So Gerhard, cf. Schmid, 661 f.

‡ Isa. ii., vi.-ix., xxxv., lx., lxx.; Matt. xix. 28; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Rev. ii. 26, iii. 21, v. 10.

crowning realization. The kingdom of God does indeed, as a spiritual power, even now achieve its invisible triumphs; but while God's doings are invisible and spiritual in their origin, the process progresses from within outward and the end is external embodiment. Following in the steps of her Lord, the Church now treads the path of suffering, weakness and shame, sharing the afflictions of Christ, that she may also share his triumph at last and have her glorious apocalypse along with his appearance in glory.\* Risen and transfigured with her Lord, she will then exercise power and display dominion over the earth in another sense than is true of her career at present, and that, according to revelation, for a thousand years.† These figures are doubtless not to be interpreted with mathematical literalness, as if the divine chronometer were based upon the same scale with ours.‡ Those numerical limits of the triumph rather indicate that this period falls within the sphere of earthly development and not within the confines of eternity. It lies this side the definitive goal.

"The millennium is a period of transition. The longest night is over, but still the full day has not yet come."§ It corresponds with the intermediate state of the believer, whose individual experience represents the career of the aggregate organism. Between the preliminary goal of his personal earthly life and the final goal of eternal perfection, there intervenes a transitional state of blessedness. So, too, the whole body, of which he is a member, is to celebrate a glorified state intermediate between the period of conflict and the eternal glory. In the case of the believer such a condition of preliminary blessedness is not disputed—why should it be for the totality of believers, the Church? In the former case experience reflects its unerring light, the sainted spirit awaiting the resurrection; in the latter we are left solely to the pages of prophetic revelation, which in the nature of the case are difficult of interpretation prior to the actual fulfilment. A yet more striking and unmistakable type of the Church's transitional glory whilst yet in her earthly, temporal sphere, is given in that mysterious portion of the life of her Head between the resurrection and the ascension. In that half-heavenly, half earthly period, heaven and earth being so closely joined that it forms a proper part neither of the state of humiliation nor of exalta-

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\* Phil. iii. 10; Col. i. 24; 1 John iii. 1, 2.

† Rev. xx.

‡ Ps. xc; 2 Pet. iii. 8.

§ Van Oosterzee.

tion, the Church has the mirror of her own transfigured state after the resurrection unto life—Calvary behind her, Olivet immediately before, without having yet ascended from its summit, “the period of transition from earthly existence to heavenly glory.”

Immediately upon the revelation of the Lord, as already noted, will be witnessed on the one hand the destruction of embodied and personal evil, the binding of Satan, who has the power of death, and on the other the absolute release of the saints who had fallen victims to his power. But these two events, which are the instantaneous results of the Parousia and which are correlative and necessarily take place in immediate connection with each other, do not complete the scene. As the whole Church partakes of the afflictions of Christ, so the whole Church must share in the revelation of his glory. Hence, simultaneously with the resurrection of those who had departed in Christ, will occur the like transformation of those still living in the faith of Jesus and awaiting his return.\* And as the Church, both in its living and its dead, is thus transfigured, a like glorification must overtake the seat of her existence.† Yet all this does not imply the absolute destruction of evil. A spiritu-corporeal kingdom, perfected and visibly ruled by the glorified Mediator, succeeds the Church militant, but “the world outside of its domain is not at once changed. That part of the race not incorporated with the true Church has not been rescued from the sway of sin and death, although it has been brought immediately under the influence of the glorified Church and made to recognize the universal authority of the Lord.” The power of evil has indeed been broken, its forces repressed, its personal principle and centre bound,‡ but the binding of Satan does not indicate that sin in the unrepentant world has suddenly reached its termination. This serves only as a pledge that it is no longer under the inspiration and direction of a personal chief, no longer an organized power, and that it can accordingly no longer oppose any barrier to the triumphant realization of Christ’s kingdom. The enemies are driven back, but not yet destroyed; disarmed, but not dead. Yea, prophecy discloses yet one more encounter. A single verse, but of unmistakable clearness, points to Satan’s release in connection with the issue of the millennial reign.§

\* 1 Thess. iv. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 51 ff.; 2 Cor. v. 4.

† So Von Hofman, Luthardt and others, even Thomasius.

‡ Rev. xx.

§ Rev. xx. 7-9.

In the mysterious relation of the world of evil to the empire of truth, that unfathomable problem of the ages, the decisive battle is reserved for the very last stage.

It is not from any accident, not by breaking through his prison walls with sheer infernal power, but it is in accordance with the divine purpose\* that the wicked one is once more at large, mustering the gigantic concentration of his remaining forces to make a last desperate onslaught against the camp of the saints and against the holy city.

The development of human sin in its relation to the work of redemption, the persistent rejection by the unconverted of the grace and rule of Jesus Christ, even when he reigns gloriously upon the earth freed for the time from Satan's dominion, this inveterate and obdurate hostility at once to the crucified and the glorified one, to grace and to judgment, will necessarily bring about a ripeness, an audacity, a terrible energy of sin, such as will determine its forces to stake their all upon one desperate, decisive engagement.

The power of evil in mankind will thus run its own desperate course and reach its normal, free, yet frantic development. Refusing to be won by all the manifestations of divine grace, judgment and glory, the true and the final representatives of fallen humanity will readily, and with full consciousness of what they are doing, surrender themselves to the prince of darkness, now once more released, and will under him make their terrific, hellish onset against the Church.

The encounter will not be protracted. Satan, long bound, is to be loosed only for a little season.† The harvest being ripe and the separation between the wheat and the tares having already taken place, there is no longer that intermixture of good and evil which characterized the field when the seed of the word was struggling from one stage to another of its growth, and which retarded the complete victory and prevented the ultimate decision. The lines are now clearly drawn. The forces of the Lord can at once, without intermediate agents or successive contests, proceed to the uprooting and extermination of the kingdom of darkness. Its last daring onslaught becomes the supreme moment of doom. The development of the wicked has at last reached its climax as ordained of God. After witnessing the manifest and most glorious character

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\* Δει αὐτὸν λυθῆναι.

† Μικρὸν χρόνον.

of the Church and her most palpable union with her glorified King they march deliberately forward to compass her destruction. Their attack is directed against the Lord himself, for they recognize his union with the bride. And thus they precipitate upon themselves the immediate interposition of divine judgment. The Almighty God, against whom personally they aimed their assault in bearing down his Church, now himself encounters the last remnants of hostility to his kingdom. There is no longer any demand for intermediate human agencies, such as were employed in the long conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, no longer any progress of the contest with its former variable fortunes, but the overwhelming fire falls direct from God out of heaven and sweeps away the assailing hosts.\* Their charge in solid phalanx against the city of God proves their swift march into final and eternal doom.

All opposition is at last by one blow annihilated, and the hour of judgment, the last hour on the clock of time, signalizing the arrival of eternity, is at hand. All the finally and obdurately impenitent, those in their graves and those yet alive under the glorious reign of the Christ-Redeemer, as well as the spirits of darkness reserved in their prison to that hour, receive now their irrevocable sentence. Every hostile power is crushed, and death itself, the last enemy, is annihilated. The definitive goal, the very last point of history, is reached.

The work of Christ is complete. Redeemed humanity has been absolutely converted into the kingdom of God. Perfectly and forever separated from evil, mankind has in itself become the object of immediate divine favor.† Hence without ceasing to be Mediator or man, yet having finished his peculiar Messianic work and executed his personal mediatorial reign, the Son now delivers up the kingdom to the Father, to the infinite hands by which it was committed to him, that God henceforth may be all in all.‡

To these attempts by the light of Holy Scripture to discover some definite view of the Church's remote future, reason is ever raising its stereotyped objection, How can these things be? Without being always conscious of the rationalistic unbelief which prompts this question, the teachers of Israel are continually floundering in the same bog with their renowned prototype, to whom a second birth

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\* Rev. xx. 8-10.

† John xvi. 26, 27.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 28.



was incomprehensible. "What a marvellous conception," says Dr. Thomasius: "a sainted Church of God, spiritually and corporeally perfected, her glorified Lord in her midst, surrounded by a humanity in which sin and death still remain—and then a history of this Church \* \* an onset of the assembled nations against the holy city luminous with celestial glory, a final attack from Satan, till at last fire from heaven shall devour the wicked assailants!" \*

Happily no truth is dependent upon our capacity of conceiving or representing it. And the certainty of these things is assuredly not overthrown through our confessed inability of comprehending them. The details of the remote and momentous period between the antecedent and the final goal have not been exposed to our view, but the order of its events and their more definite outlines here briefly traced, are derived by many of the ablest and soundest expositors from God's holy word, and that, too, in this age of unfettered and thorough scientific exegesis. Surely the results of the biblical studies of such scholars as Auberlen, Alford, Kling, Luthardt, Olshausen, Von Hoffman. and others of their rank in the domain of exegesis, are not whiffed away by a sneer. Theology itself is kept from embracing similar views only by the confessed and unprotestant renunciation of scriptural investigation on this point. "The exegesis of the Old Testament," says Thomasius,† "is yet too crude, confused and fluctuating to be employed in the structure of eschatological doctrine, and similarly the exposition of the Apocalypse is still lacking that consensus which is necessary to dogmatics."

Must then this whole subject, the agitation of which has uniformly characterized the most energetic periods of the Church's life, be relegated to the realm of agnosticism? Is the Bible in large portions of its most thrilling utterances still a sealed, not to say a forbidden book? Must the Church relinquish the idea of ascertaining a definite faith touching her own bright consummation, and that simply because of the appalling difficulties encountered by the very abundance of revelations? Was it by a supineness like this that she won and established her great fundamental doctrines of Theology and Soteriology? Or is it with the temple of Christian truth as with the unfortunate tower suggested in the parable—the foundations having been laid, men are not able to complete its structure? Does not providence itself call the Church of these latter days to bestow

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\* *Christologie*, III. 464.

† *Christologie*.

her most intense thought upon the problems of the future? With its undergirding immovable, its towering walls impregnable, what remains for theology, but to proceed with the dome and raise one by one its gilded stories until they strike the arches of the sky and complete the union of heaven with earth.

## ARTICLE XVIII.

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### FREE WILL.

BY H. L. BAUGHER, D. D.

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THE Article of the Augsburg Confession coming next in the regular order in which the several articles have been discussed on the Holman foundation, is the eighteenth—"De Libero Arbitrio," or "Of Free Will." It reads as follows:

"Concerning free will they teach, that the human will possesses some liberty for the performance of civil duties, and for the choice of those things subject to reason. But it does not possess the power, without the influence of the Holy Spirit, of fulfilling the righteousness of God, or spiritual righteousness: for the natural man receiveth not the things which are of the Spirit of God: but this is accomplished in the heart, when the Holy Spirit is received through the word. The same is declared by Augustine in so many words: 'We confess that all men have a free will, which possesses the judgment of reason, by which they cannot indeed, without the divine aid, either begin or certainly accomplish what is becoming in things relating to God; but only in works of the present life, as well good as evil. In good works, I say, which arise from our natural goodness, such as to choose to labor in the field, to eat and drink, to choose to have a friend, to have clothing, to build a house, to take a wife, to feed cattle, to learn various and useful arts, or to do any good thing relative to this life; all which things, however, do not exist without the divine government; yea, they exist and begin to be from him and through him. And in evil works (men have a free will), such as to choose to worship an idol, to will to commit murder, etc.'

"They condemn the Pelagians, and others, who teach that we are able, by the mere powers of nature, without the aid of the Holy Spirit, to love God above all things, and to do his commands, as to the substance of our actions. For, although nature may be able, after a certain manner, to perform external actions, such as to abstain from theft, from murder, etc., yet it cannot perform the inner motions, such as the fear of God, faith in God, chastity, patience, etc."\*

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\* We give the translation found in the Book of Worship. The original in German and Latin (Müller, *Symb. Bücher*), is as follows:

Vom *freien Willen* wird gelehret, dass der Mensch etlichermassen einen freien Willen hat äusserlich ehrbar zu leben und zu wählen unter denen Dingen, so die Vernunft begreift; aber ohne Gnad, Hilfe und Wirkung des heiligen Geistes vermag der Mensch nicht Gott gefällig werden, Gott herzlich zu fürchten, oder zu gläuben, oder die angeborne böse Lust aus dem Herzen zu werfen; sondern solchs geschicht durch den heiligen Geist, welcher durch Gottes Wort gegeben wird. Denn Paulus spricht 1 Kor. ii. 14. *Der natürliche Mensch vernimmt nichts vom Geist Gottes.*

Und damit man erkennen möge, dass hierin kein Neuigkeit gelehrt werde, so sind das die klaren Wort Augustini vom freien Willen, wie jetzund hiebei geschrieben aus dem 3 Buch Hypognoticon: *“ Wir bekennen, dass in allen Menschen ein freier Wille ist, denn sie haben je alle natürlichen, angeborenen Verstand und Vernunft, nicht dass sie etwas vermögen mit Gott zu handeln, als: Gott von Herzen zu lieben, zu fürchten, sondern allein in äusserlichen Werken dieses Lebens haben sie Freiheit gutes oder böses zu wählen. Gut mein ich, das die Natur vermag, als auf dem Acker zu arbeiten oder nicht, zu essen, zu trinken, zu einem Freunde zu gehen oder nicht, ein Kleid an oder auszu-  
thun, zu bauen, ein Weib zu nehmen, ein Handwerk zu treiben und dergleichen etwas nützlichs und gutes zu thun. Welches alles doch ohne Gott nicht ist noch bestehet, sondern alles aus ihm und durch ihn ist. Dagegen kann der Mensch auch böses aus eigener Wahl fürnehmen, als für einem Abgott nieder zu knien, ein Todtschlag zu thun, etc.”*

De *libero arbitrio* docent, quod humana voluntas habeas aliquam libertatem ad efficiendam civilem institutam et deligendas res rationi subjectas. Sed non habet vim sine Spiritu Sancto efficiendae justitiae Dei seu justitiae spiritualis, quia animalis homo non percipit ea, quae sunt Spiritus Dei: sed haec fit in cordibus, quum per verbum Spiritus Sanctus concipitur. Haec totidem verbis dicit Augustinibus lib. III., Hypognoticon: *“ Esse fatemur liberum arbitrium omnibus hominibus, habens quidem indicium rationis, non per quod sit idonum in iis, quae ad Deum pertinent, sine Deo aut inchoare aut certe peragere, sed tantum in operibus viae praesentis tam bonis quam etiam malis. Bonis dico, quae de bono naturae ariuntur, id est velle laborare in agro, velle manducare et bibere, velle habere amicum velle habere indumenta, velle fabricare domum, uxorem velle ducere, pecora nutrire, artem discere diversarum rerum bonarum, vel quidquid bonum ad praesentem pertinet vitam. Quae omnia non sine divino gubernaculo subsistunt, imo ex ipso et per ipsum sunt et esse coeperunt. Malis vero dico, ut est velle idolum colere, velle homicidium cet.”*

Damnant Pelagianos et alios, qui docent, quod sine Spiritu Sancto solis naturae viribus possimus Deum super omnia diligere, item praecepta Dei facere quoad substantiam actuum. Quamquam enim externa opera aliquo modo efficere natura possit (potest enim continere manus a furto, a caede), tamen interiores motus non potest efficere, ut timorem Dei, fiduciam erga Deum, castitatem, patientiam cet.

## DEFINITION.

Although here, as elsewhere, the Confessors avoid all mere philosophy, looking at the subject merely from a religious standpoint, yet it may not be amiss for us, before entering directly on a consideration of what they say on this, a pre-eminently philosophical subject, to seek some clear definition of the subject itself, even though we go to the philosophers for it. What is the Will? and what is the Freedom of the Will? Writers on the Human Mind with general consent arrange its functions into the threefold division of The Intellect, the Sensibilities, and the Will, or the mind knowing or reasoning, the mind feeling, and the mind willing. These are but functions or acts of the one indivisible mind. The Will is that in man which is casual and constitutes more than anything else his personality. He *has* reason and consciousness, intelligence and desire; but when he puts forth a volition he declares himself and becomes conscious that he *is*, and of what he is!

There is in man a *nature*-basis, by which he is a part of that which we call Nature: and nature is determined by the fixed laws that govern it, and is, therefore, not in any sense free. But there is in man also a *personal* basis, whereby he is distinguished from nature, whereby he knows himself to be a moral being, having in himself a power of causation, which is free from outward compulsion, free from the fixedness of natural law, and in the exercise of which he is conscious of moral responsibility, of right and wrong.

"Every man is conscious," says Dr. Reid, "of a power to determine in things which he conceives to depend upon his determination. To this power we give the name of *will*."

Carpenter calls the Will, "A self-determining power within us."

Liebmann says, "Will is the function of the Ego by which it determines itself to action."

Bouillet calls it, "The faculty of willing, of self-determining?" and says, "It differs from desire and from the understanding; it ought to control the former, and receive illumination from the latter."

Tappan says, "Will is employed to express the causality of the mind," is "the power by which to determine personal acts," and, in view of its essential connection with intelligence, calls it "A power of rational self-determination."

Many of you will recall President Valentine's definition, that "The will is the soul's power of causality for choices."



The very idea of the Will involves the idea of a certain freedom or liberty possessed by it. The question before us involves the extent of this liberty. The two things are so inseparably connected as to be defined together by philosophers. Thus Kant says, 'Everything in nature works according to laws. A rational being alone has the faculty of acting in accordance with conception of laws, principles, *i. e.* has a *will*. As reason is required that we may deduce action from laws, the will is nothing more than practical reason. If the will be in itself in complete conformity with reason, it is the faculty of choosing that only which the reason recognizes as good; in opposition to this, the determination of the will is necessitation. A perfectly good will cannot be conceived of as *necessitated* to actions in conformity with law. Hence, for the will of God, and for a holy will in general, there can be no imperatives. The *shall* is out of place, the *will* is of itself in necessary harmony with law.' Again, he says, "Will is that kind of causality attributed to living agents, in so far as they are possessed of reason; and freedom is such a property of that causality as enables them to originate events independently of foreign determining causes."

I. H. Fichte says, "Liberty, in its highest sense, can be attributed to that only which is through itself everything that it is. There can be nothing freely willed which does not in some degree express the essential nature of him who wills. To be free is to determine ourselves; knowing, feeling and willing in accordance with our individual nature."

K. Ph. Fischer says, "All actual liberty of the subject willing, is a making of oneself free, and as the will can be nothing which it is not in itself, this essential liberty must be the presupposition of our becoming subjectively free; and the self-freeing of a subject willing, is nothing more than making itself that for which it was created."

Hegel says, "Liberty lies in the indetermination of the will; it has in it no determination produced by nature; it has itself only as object and contents; it refers itself only to itself; it is the faculty of reflective self-determination."

Schelling says, "Liberty is not a totally fortuitous occurrence of actions, nor are these actions determined by empirical necessity; rather it consists in a loftier necessity, whose spring is the essential nature of him who acts. That only is free which acts in accordance with the laws of its own essential nature, and thus results of neces-

sity" (*i. e.* a necessity of *certainty*). "It is the faculty of the good and of the evil."

Ulrici says, "Liberty is the consciousness of the ability to decide differently, to act differently. The human will as the power of self-manifestation, self-assertion, and self-determination, is simply the highest grade of that spontaneity which pertains to every human being. In the consciousness of itself it is exalted to the consciousness of liberty. We impute to ourselves, in our consciousness, liberty of willing. The impulses which operate on our wills present themselves to our consciousness not as coercive causes, but are rendered motives by the soul itself. Thus our willing and acting are to our consciousness free."

Zeller says, "To determine oneself means that we have in our Self, in the Ego, in the personality as such, the ground of the specific action which is determined."

Again, Freedom of the Will has been, briefly but somewhat loosely, defined to be, "Power to the contrary."

In looking over the many definitions and statements of philosophers, we are impressed with the fact there is, to say the least, as much difference among them in reference to the same subjects, and as much contradiction of themselves and of one another, as ever has existed among or been alleged against the much abused theologians and dogmaticians.

Stewart vs. Reed seems to acknowledge that in certain respects the problem we are considering is beyond the capacity of human thought, and to admit that all reasoning for, as all reasoning against, our liberty, is on this account invalid.

Yet it would not do thus to dismiss a practical question of such importance that its determination affects the whole subject of Anthropology.

The question of Free Will is not concerning man in his original state before the fall, nor after regeneration, nor after the resurrection; but only concerning his fallen state before regeneration. How was man's will affected by the fall? How were his powers as a self-determining moral agent affected? "What powers in spiritual things he has from himself, since the fall of our first parents, and before regeneration, and whether, from his own powers, before he has been born again by God's Spirit, he be able to dispose and prepare him-

self for God's grace, and to accept or not the grace offered through the Holy Ghost in the word and holy sacraments?"\*

#### THE HISTORY OF THE DISCUSSION OF THIS QUESTION.

During the first three centuries after the closing of the New Testament Canon, the doctrines of sin and grace, in their more difficult and scientific aspects did not seriously engage the attention of the Church. As a natural consequence of her polemic attitude towards the fatalism of Paganism and the denial of responsibility by Gnosticism, the anthropology of the period was marked by a strong emphasis of the doctrine of human freedom. This was particularly manifest in the Alexandrian and Antiochian schools, and became the general type of doctrine for the Eastern Church. In the Western Church, led by Tertullian, Cyprian, Hilary, and Ambrose, a contrary tendency manifested itself and grew, until the two opposite predominant tendencies ran into two great dogmatic divisions, which exist until to-day. In respect to that early period, they were known respectively as the Greek Anthropology and the Latin Anthropology. The former virtually denied original sin, made the fall to affect only the corporeal and sensuous nature, but not the rational and voluntary, and was synergistic in its view of regeneration. The latter held original sin to be voluntary, as being self will, and, therefore, a matter of guilt; that the Adamic connection relates to the entire man, the voluntary and rational as well as the corporeal and sensuous, and the will is corrupted as well as the other parts of his nature, and that the corruption of the sensuous nature is consequent upon, and not antecedent to, the apostasy of the rational and voluntary nature of man. The Latin Church was also monergistic in its view of regeneration, holding the human will to be, up to that point, hostile to God, and therefore not co-operating with him.†

The Pelagian controversy of the fifth century furnished occasion for a thorough and animated discussion of the subject of Free Will; and, since the condemnatory clause of our Article puts the Pelagians and those who may be classed with them under the ban, we may as well, right here, consider the points of that controversy, which will lead us to examine first the negative side of the views and statement of the Confessors.

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\* Form. Conc. Part I., Chap II.

† Cf. Shedd's Hist. of Doc., Vol. I., Chap. IX.

## THE PELAGIAN CONTROVERSY.

The man whose name is inseparably connected with this controversy and gave it origin was Pelagius, a British monk of honest and good intentions, who, seeing so much of that so-called faith of which St. James speaks, which is divorced from works, and finding men who used the doctrine of human corruption and free grace to excuse their own sins, thought to correct these evils by preaching a rigorous morality and stimulating men thereto by exalting their merely human powers, setting forth possibilities in the spiritual realm of which he represented them to be capable by the powers of their own will and a culture of their own faculties.

Pelagius' leading opponent was the great Augustine, of North Africa. Between these two persons and their experiences, there was as great a difference as between the opposing systems to which each has given his name. Pelagius is represented as a man of cold passionless nature, who lived a quiet, cloister life, unshaken by conflicts from without or within. Augustine, as is well known, was a man of ardent temperament, and during the early period of his life was in bondage to strong corrupt passion. He passed through the throes of intense conflict of flesh and spirit before he arrived at peace with conscience and with God,\* and an experience of that renovating power, requisite to a holy life, of which he felt the need. Like Luther, his anthropology was born of his own innermost experience. He had himself been in the depths of human depravity, and knew himself to be utterly unable of himself to get out of the horrible pit. He had experienced in himself the power of divine grace as able to save unto the uttermost. He found in himself nothing, morally and spiritually, to commend or hang a hope upon: he found in the treasures of divine grace a fulness that satisfied all his needs. His system is found in miniature in his own experience, and is deep and rich: whereas Pelagius, devoid of a rich inward Christian experience, misconceived the true spiritual nature of holiness and sanctification, and his most serious religious teaching never went beyond the exhortation to live a sober and virtuous life: and his system is correspondingly superficial, and perhaps for this reason more acceptable to the natural heart.

The deepest ground of the difference between Pelagianism and Augustinianism lies in their respective views of the relation between the Creator and the creation, the former looking upon the creature

as at first endowed by the Creator with sufficient powers and faculties, and then left to itself to develop itself independently of God, whereas the latter viewed the creature as entirely and always dependent on the Creator, as much for the continuance and development of its powers and faculties as originally for their gift. Augustine called the relation of man to God, even before the fall, and that of the pure spirits in heaven, by the term *gratia*. As the eye is circumstanced to the light of the sun, so is the created spirit to the grace of God. Pelagius said, "That the eye can see is the gift of God; whether it sees well or ill, depends on ourselves." In reference to goodness, he distinguished a *posse*, a *velle* and an *esse*. The *posse* is the gift of God; the *velle* and *esse* are to be referred to man as proceeding from his will. All moral character, then, comes from the use man makes of his powers. Pelagius held that man has the ability, at every moment, of doing good or evil; that his will is, as before the fall, in moral equilibrium, which is broken by his choice in every case. This gives an atomistic theory of character; it is made to consist in acts or the expression, and not at all in the *habitus* or condition. The fruit itself is made the character of the tree, instead of an expression of the character inherent in the root and sap, the trunk and leaf. \*

Pelagius held that our first parents stood only for themselves, and that their sin did not affect the race except by the power of example. Men are corrupt through constant habit of evil, not by nature. They still have the same natural powers of holiness that Adam had. There have been those, Pelagius said, who have lived without sin: among his list of whom he mentions Abel, John the Baptist, and Mary, the Lord's mother. The Pelagians appealed to the virtues of the heathen, as evidences of the moral powers of unaided human nature. Indeed, the whole Pelagian system resolved itself into nothing more than natural religion.

It is such teachings—"that we are able, by the mere powers of nature, without the aid of the Holy Spirit, to love God above all things, and to do his commands, as to the substance of our actions"—that the Augsburg Confessors "condemn."

"In the system of Pelagius," says Baur, "everything depends upon the principle of the freedom of the will: this is the determining and fundamental conception in his doctrine of sin and of grace. Freedom, as the absolute capacity of choice (*liberum arbitrium*) to



determine equally for good or evil, appeared to him in such a degree to be the substantial good of human nature, that he even reckoned the capacity for evil as a *bonum naturæ*, since we cannot choose good without in like manner being able to choose evil." We are reminded here of Eve's argument with herself before the forbidden tree—she saw that it was "a tree to be desired to make one wise," and of Satan's persuasion that by eating of it they would know both "good and evil."

Augustine, on the contrary, held that state of the mind in which it is no longer necessary to choose between good and evil, the being free from sin, to be the true freedom, and, in his treatise, *De Civit. Dei.*, xiv. II, which was not written against the Pelagians, says, "The will, therefore, is then truly free, when it does not serve vices and sins. Such it was given by God; and, having been lost by man's own vice, it cannot be restored, unless by Him who was able to give it. Whence the Truth says, 'If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed.' But this is the very same as if He should say, If the Son save you, then shall ye be truly saved. Whence, forsooth, He is the Liberator, the Saviour."

Such a thing as a *characterless* will, a *liberum indifferentiæ*, in equilibrium between choices good or ill—such as Pelagius ascribed to man—Augustine regarded as an impossibility, contrary to the very nature of the faculty called will, and in this he is fully sustained by the philosophers. Power to the contrary, in either direction (of good or evil), he considered only an accident and not the substance of voluntariness. "Voluntariness consists in positively willing the one thing that is willed, and not in the bare possibility of willing a contrary thing. If a person walk by his own self-decision, this decision would be neither strengthened nor weakened by endowing him with another power to fly. His voluntariness depends upon the single fact that he is walking without external compulsion, and of his own accord." "The power of contrary choice, according to the Augustinian anthropology, can be given in only one direction"—that is, in the downward direction of sin. "It is a transient and accidental characteristic of the human will, which is intended to belong to it only during the middle or probationary stage in its history, and which disappears either in a state of immutable holiness or immutable sin."

"Even when the power to the contrary, or the *possibilitas peccandi*,

is given for purposes of probation, the real freedom of the will, according to Augustine, is seen in *not* using it, rather than in using it—in continuing to will the right, and refusing to will the wrong. Persistency in the existing determination, and not a capricious departure into another determination, is the token of true rational liberty. “Velle et nolle, propriæ voluntatis est—by which Augustine means that to will holiness and to will sin, and to will *either* holiness or sin, is the characteristic of the will.” On the other hand what the Latin anthropology made the accident of moral freedom the Greek anthropology made its substance, holding it “not sufficient that the will be uncompelled and self-moved. It must possess, over and above this, a power of alternative choice—the *possibilitas usque partis*. Hence the human will, by creation and structure, is indifferent and undetermined. Having no choice by and at creation, it can choose with equal facility either of the two contraries, holiness or sin. And in *this* fact, and not in its positive self-motion, consists its freedom.”\*.

Here we see an important difference between the two tendencies as to the very nature of the will, and, consequently, in their conceptions of moral freedom. This has tended to confusion in the discussion.

In the Pelagian controversy the doctrine concerning Grace naturally came in for as much discussion as that of Free Will: and generally Liberty and Grace are the co-ordinate parts of one and the same discussion. In the Pelagian system there would seem to be no room for grace, in the usual scripture sense of the term. For if children are now born with uncorrupted powers, equal to those of our first parents, and if, even after sins committed, their faculties are so unimpaired that every moment they have power to choose the good or the evil, their probation also is like that of our first parents, into which grace, in the evangelical sense, did not enter. If man is sufficient of himself, what expectation or need of grace?

However, they did not carry out their principles to this extent, but contended, sometimes stoutly, for the necessity of grace as an assistant to nature. Pelagius asserted that God's grace enabled men to accomplish more easily what they ought to accomplish by their free will, and admitted various stages in the divine education of humanity correspondent to its progressive deterioration. But, as

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\* Shedd, Hist. Doc., Vol. I., 3, § 3.

the two systems differed in their idea of freedom, so it was in respect to grace. The Pelagian view was indefinite and superficial, and was always an external communication, something foreign, and not, as Augustine viewed it, an impartation of divine life through Christ. Christ's work was *educational*. He promulgated a new and higher law, presented new motives to virtue, and gave a perfect example.\* But men did not need a Redeemer, since they were not sold under sin, in moral bondage; nor to be born again of the Holy Spirit and renewed into the divine life of Christ, for they were not by nature morally dead.

Wiggers compares the three systems with each other as follows: Augustinianism asserts that man is morally *dead*; Semi-Pelagianism maintains that he is morally *sick*; Pelagianism holds that he is morally *well*. And they that be whole need not a physician. But the dead need to be raised, if they are to live; need to be born again (or from above) by the new-creating Spirit of God.

Augustine, in his theory of regeneration, distinguished three stages of grace: *gratia praeveniens* or *praeprans*, which, without any efficiency of man's powers, working sovereignly, illumines the understanding, arouses the sensibilities, and leads man to faith, herein setting free the enslaved will: then follows *gratia operans*, or grace working the divine life in the soul, establishing it in a peaceful sense of justification and acceptance with God, confirming the liberated will in choosing God and goodness: finally, *gratia coöperans*, in which the will of man is brought into entire harmony with God, and a perfection is attained characterized by impossibility of sinning (*non posse peccare*), which Augustine regarded as the *real* freedom, and which is realized only in the future state.

In solving the problem how it comes that grace is effective in some persons and fruitless in others, Augustine argued that as man is at first, through the bondage of his will, unable to do any thing toward his own regeneration, is dead, the reason of the difference cannot be referred to man, every individual person being equally unable. Therefore it must be referred to God, who works in man of his own good pleasure; and, accordingly, Augustine resorted, for explanation, to the Divine Sovereignty and to a Decree of unconditional Predestination, whereby some are elected, irrespective of God's

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\* See Neander's Hist. Christ. Dogmas, Vol. II. (Translated by Ryland, Bohn's Library.)

foreknowledge concerning them, to everlasting life, begun in regeneration and carried on by grace, whilst all others are left to their sinful selves without any attempt at recovery on God's part. His doctrine doomed even infants to hell. It was reactionary against the severity of this doctrine of absolute Predestination that the Semi-Pelagian theories arose, which attempted to take a middle ground between Pelagianism and Augustinianism. They conditioned the efficiency of divine grace in the individual upon an internal recipiency and susceptibility on his part. At the head of the Semi-Pelagian party was John Cassian, and, his views may serve to represent the tendency.

Free Will, he held, and Grace agreed, and hence there was an opposing one-sidedness which maintained either Grace alone or Free Will alone. Augustine and Pelagius were each wrong in their own way. The idea of the Divine justice in the determination of man's lot after the first transgression did not preponderate in Cassian's writings as in Augustine's, but the idea of a disciplinary divine love, by the leadings of which men are to be led to repentance. He appeals also to the mysteriousness of God's ways, not as concerns predestination, but the variety of leadings by which God leads different individuals to salvation. Nor is one law applicable to all ; in some cases Grace anticipates (*gratia præveniens*), in others a conflict precedes and then divine help comes to them as Grace. In no instance can divine Grace operate independently of the free self-determination of man. As the husbandman must do his part, but all this avails nothing without the divine blessing, so man must do his part, yet this profits nothing without divine grace.\*

Another semi-Pelagian leader, Faustus, in a presentation of the pure doctrine, compares the contrast of Freedom and Grace with that of the divine and human in the person of Christ ; as in that its peculiar qualities are to be attributed to each nature, so in man we must distinguish what proceeds from the grace of God and what is of man. The Free Will must not be regarded as annihilated, but it belongs to man to regain the divine favor by his own exertions and God's help. A spark is placed within him which it behooves him to cherish by the help of grace.

Before the close of the fifth century Augustinianism had triumphed in the Western Church as the orthodox doctrine, though not with-

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\* Neander : Hist. Christ. Dogmas, Vol. II.

out leaving in many individuals therein the seeds of the contrary doctrine. The leaders of the Eastern Church kept up a decided opposition to Pelagianism, yet the former tendency, toward confidence in the natural human powers, still characterized it.

In the middle ages semi-Pelagianism gradually supplanted Augustinianism, even where the latter had been before triumphant, and though supported by Gottschalk, Bede, Anselm, Bernard, and most of the schoolmen, until finally it was by the Council of Trent formally stated as the papal doctrine.

Chemnitz,\* in his review of this Council, expresses the opinion that such doctrines (semi-Pelagianism) are condemned by the *language* of the decrees, but quotes the expositor of the Council to the effect that said decrees were composed with such ingenuity as to declare nothing positively, and to leave men on the fence of this controversy, free to get down on either side.

Bellarmin,† the great Romish expositor, represents man as created *in puris naturalibus*—which is very much like Pelagius' *non pleni nascimur*—and that the condition of man *in puris naturalibus* differed from his condition after the fall only as that of a naked person from one who had been stripped of his clothes. For, in the papal view, original righteousness was not inherent in man's nature, but was a supernatural endowment; and, accordingly, the corruption of human nature consists not in an inherent defect, but in the loss of supernatural gifts.

"Holding such views of original sin," says Shedd, "it was logical that the Tridentine theologians should combat the doctrine of human impotence, and the helpless dependence of the apostate will upon the divine efficiency in order to its renewal. They adopt the theory of synergism in regeneration, and defend it with great earnestness."

"If any one," say the Tridentine Canons, "shall affirm that the free will of man was lost, and became extinct, after the sin of Adam, \* \* \* let him be accursed. If any one shall affirm that the free will of man, moved and excited by God, co-operates nothing by assenting to God thus exciting and calling, so that it *disposes and prepares itself* for obtaining the grace of justification, but like some

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\* Examen Conc. Trid., Pars I., locus iii., § 1, Cap. I.

† De Controversiis, iv. 15, vi. 10.



inanimate object does nothing at all, but is merely passive, let him be accursed. If any one shall affirm that all works that are performed before justification, from whatever reason they are done, are really and truly sins, and merit the displeasure of God, or that the more a man endeavors to dispose himself for grace, the more does he sin, let him be accursed. If any one shall affirm that the sinner is justified by faith alone, in the sense that nothing else is requisite which may co-operate to the attainment of the grace of justification, and that the sinner does not need to be prepared and disposed by the motion of his own will, let him be accursed."

We have come now to the Reformation period, and to the positive and direct teaching of Protestantism, upon the subject in hand, as formulated by the Confessors of Augsburg in their

#### ARTICLE XVIII.

"Concerning free will they teach, that the human will possesses some liberty." Melancthon says in the Apology, "Nor, indeed, do we deny liberty to the human will." They did not deny that universal human consciousness, distinguishing man from the rest of creation, that his acts are *his own*, unconstrained by anything external. They did not take away human personality, or destroy, by their theory on this subject, the possibility of a sense of responsibility and guilt, which latter feelings are in other parts of the Confession so strongly insisted upon. They did not hold that any of the human faculties were destroyed by the fall. Man still has Reason, Feeling, Will. But a will without any freedom is no will at all. If will is "the power by which we determine personal acts" (Tappan), man still has this. If "will is that kind of causality attributed to living agents, in so far as they are possessed of reason; and freedom is such a property of that causality as enables them to originate events independently of foreign determining causes" (Kant), then fallen and unregenerate man is still possessed of will and freedom of will. If "to be free is to determine ourselves" in the sense of "knowing, feeling, and willing in accordance with our individual nature" (Fichte), man still has such freedom. But what if his "individual nature" be changed from what it was? "The question," says Gerhard (v. 100), "is not concerning the essence of the will itself, whether this has survived the fall; for this we loudly maintain, viz., that man has lost not his will, but the soundness of it." "The

will," he further (v. 87) says, "is an essential power of the soul, and the soul is nothing else than the powers or essential faculties themselves. Therefore whilst the soul remains, its essential powers, intellect and will, also remain. On the other hand, the power of free and uncoerced volition is essential to the will; therefore, as long as the will remains this power also remains. In this sense and in this respect we firmly believe, and profess with uplifted voice, that the will of man has remained free even after the fall." This is what is termed by some "*formal*" freedom.

The sphere of this freedom allowed to fallen and unregenerate man by our Article is "for the performance of civil duties, and for the choice of those things subject to reason:" "works of the present life, as well good as evil," as they explain in a quotation attributed to Augustine; "good works which arise from our natural goodness, such as to choose to labor in the field, to eat and drink, to choose to have a friend, to have clothing, to build a house, to take a wife, to feed cattle, to learn various and useful arts, or to do any good thing relative to this life; all which things, however, do not exist without the divine government; yea, they exist and begin to be from him and through him. And in evil works, such as to choose to worship an idol, to will to commit murder, etc."

It is observable that the instances of "good works" here cited embrace nothing that has moral quality, while as to "evil works" it was scarcely necessary to cite any; because in the latter man's freedom is by no means denied, but in the former the theory is that fallen and unregenerate man can do nothing that may be truly called good, can perform no good works, can really do nothing but sin—since "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin!" Accordingly a man may externally observe all the commandments—like that earnest young ruler in the Scriptures—and yet be outside, if not far from, the kingdom of God, be without real goodness. Thus one may acknowledge God—for this, too, is within the sphere of reason, since it is only "the fool" who says "there is no God"—may abstain from taking his name in vain, and from all outward profanity, may pay outward and manifest respect to God's day and house, worshiping (outwardly) reverently with his people, may with a beautiful obedience honor his parents, may curb his passions, keep himself pure, be scrupulously honest, be liberal and kind, considerate of the poor and generous in the support of religious and charitable institutions,

may, in short, be a model of an excellent citizen; and yet God, who looks upon the heart, the seat of character, and knows the secrets thereof, will say of such a man—as he virtually did of the young ruler—"Thy heart is not right in the sight of God." His is a "natural goodness" of "outward works," such as are within "the judgment of reason," a "performance of civil duties," constituting a "civil righteousness" or "righteousness of works," which is within the ability of the unregenerate, but cannot justify before God, and which is no part of true sanctification.

We have somewhere read of such a man, one whose life was so exemplary that every one wondered why he did not become a member of the church. He seemed to be such in everything except the profession. And when that man lay upon his dying bed and was asked by the ambassador of Christ, under whose ministrations he had so often sat, "What think you of Christ?" the poor man, with conscious knowledge of his own heart and with rare candor replied, "*I hate him!*" So radically different is "natural goodness" from "spiritual righteousness." As Paul so impressively sets forth in 1 Cor. xiii. declaring even him who has all knowledge, and all intellectual faith, and all charitableness, to be *nothing without love*: and "Love is of God" and not of man! In like manner, speaking of himself—and we know the upright moral character of the man, that touching the righteousness which is in the law he was externally blameless, his outward character was unimpeachable, yet he disclaims any real righteousness, and declares his aim, "That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. iii. 6-11). Here and frequently he puts in sharpest contrast man's "own righteousness," that is, the "civil righteousness" of our Article, which is possible to the unregenerate, with "the righteousness of God," which becomes man's only by faith.

The Apology says of the human will, "It can to a certain extent render civil righteousness or the righteousness of works, it can speak of God, offer to God a certain service in outward works, obey magistrates and parents; by a choice in outward works can restrain the hands from murder, from adultery, from theft. Since there is left in human nature reason and judgment concerning objects subjected to the senses, choice between these things, and the liberty and power

to render civil righteousness, are also left. For Scripture calls that righteousness of the flesh (Heb. ix. 10) which the carnal nature, *i. e.*, reason by itself without the Holy Ghost, renders. Although the power of concupiscence is such that men more frequently obey evil dispositions than sound judgment. And the devil, who is efficacious in the godless, as Paul says (Eph. ii. 2), does not cease to incite this feeble nature to various offences. These are the reasons why even civil righteousness is rare among men, as we see that not even the philosophers themselves, who seem to have aspired after this righteousness, attained it. But it is false that the man does not sin, who performs the works of the commandments without grace."

It is, however, an extreme and untenable position when these acts of civil righteousness and natural goodness are themselves called sin. This overlooks the fact that the moral character of an act does not always reside in the motive only, but in the act *and* the motive; so that, whilst the motive may not be pure and good, the act itself may be. To call such acts sins is to confound distinctions and overthrow morality. They have a *moral* goodness, though not a *spiritual* goodness. The distinction between such acts and the same when done from right motives, is briefly set forth in that ever recurring opening to Luther's explanations of the commandments, "That we should *so fear and love God*"—as not to do evil, but the good toward our neighbor. The absence of this godly fear, this godly motive, from the acts referred to, takes them out of the religious sphere and relegates them to the merely moral and natural. The doer of them cannot claim in virtue of them restoration to harmony with God and the truly good.

Flavel compares the natural graces of unregenerate men to "flowers that decorate the dead."

It is in the realm of spiritual things that the Confessors deny all freedom to the human will. They say, "But it does not possess the power, without the influence of the Holy Spirit, of fulfilling the righteousness of God, or spiritual righteousness: for the natural man receiveth not the things which are of the Spirit of God: but this is accomplished in the heart, when the Holy Spirit is received through the word. \* \* It cannot perform the inner motions, such as the fear of God, faith in God, chastity, patience, etc." With this statement the other articles of the Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, and the Catechisms of Luther, fully agree; to

prove which quotations from them all are made in the Formula of Concord, Sol. Dec. II. We will recite from these only from the Small Catechism, the answer to the question on the Third Article of the Creed, "What is meant by this Article?" The answer is, "I believe that I cannot, merely by my own reason or natural powers, believe in or come to Jesus Christ, my Lord; but that the Holy Spirit hath called me by the gospel, enlightened me by his gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith, in like manner as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ, by the true faith; in which Christian Church he daily and richly forgives me and all other believers all our sins; and will at the last day, raise up me and all the dead, and will grant unto me and all that believe in Jesus Christ everlasting life.—This is most certainly true."

Man was created "in the image of God." To clearly and completely define what is meant by this is difficult. Hollazius thinks that "The substance itself of the human soul exhibits certain things that are *θεια* or divine, and stands related to the Divinity as to a model. For God is a Spirit, immaterial, intelligent, acting with a free will, etc. These predicates can in a certain manner be affirmed of the human soul." In this sense man did not lose the divine image through the fall: for the substance of man, that which makes him man, remains. Quenstedt (ii. 17) says, "We must distinguish between the substance of man, or the matter itself of which he is composed, and that which, as if something following, adheres most closely to the substance of man, and nevertheless, as to its accidents, perfects it internally; or we must distinguish between nature itself and its qualities, or perfections in the qualities; the image of God indicates the latter, not the former. In a few words, that the image of God is not man, but in man, *i. e.* it is not substantial or essential to man, but accidental." Wherein the divine image inhered in man's substance, it could not be lost without man's ceasing to be man: wherein it inhered in man's faculties or qualities or the perfection of them, it was lost in the fall. Man's intellect was blinded, his sensibilities weakened and deadened, his will enslaved. The day he sinned he knew good *and evil*. The divine sentence, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," took immediate effect: and a chief part of that death was the loss of man's freedom. Henceforth he is the servant of sin. He still indeed has the *libertas*



*naturae*, as explained above, a formal freedom of choice in evils, but not a freedom of power to good. "He is free," as Luthardt says, "wherein he is unfree:" free in that nature which he now has, which is a corrupted, deteriorated nature, and nowhere is this corruption more surely seen than in man's powerlessness for good. Ask almost any Sunday-school whether it is easier to do right or to do wrong, and on the spur of the moment, thinking it ought to be so, the little folks will answer, "To do right!" Then when you reply, "How is it, then, that everybody does wrong?" they are puzzled and still. Ask the same of grown people, philosophers and theologians; and Pelagians and Socinians will say it is from the habit of doing wrong, through the example of Adam. But it seems strange that a habit should be universal; that there should be one exception to it and but one, in the whole history of man. And surely none can by mere habit become a child of God or a child of the devil. Reason and experience unite in pronouncing such an answer unsatisfactory. But when it is alleged that all mankind, since the fall, are under a power operating on the soul with the like force of gravitation upon material bodies, and that there is in all men at birth an inertia of downward direction, from the force of which external power is required to deliver him, then man's evil status is sufficiently explained.

The statement of the Formula of Concord on the controversy concerning human powers, is,\* "That in spiritual and divine things the intellect, heart and will cannot, in any way, by their own natural powers, understand, believe, accept, think, will, begin, effect, do, work or concur in working anything, but they are entirely dead to good, and corrupt; so that in man's nature, since the fall, there is, before regeneration, not the least spark of spiritual power remaining still present, by which, of himself, he can prepare himself for God's grace, or accept the offered grace, or for and of himself, be capable of it, or apply or accommodate himself thereto, or, by his own powers, be able of himself, as of himself, to aid, do, work or concur in working anything for his conversion, either entirely, or in half, or in even the least or most inconsiderable part, but he is the servant of sin (John viii. 34; Eph ii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 26). Hence the natural free will, according to its perverted disposition and nature, is strong and active only with respect to what is displeasing and contrary to God."

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\* Form. Conc. Part II. Sol. Dec.

This reads like a legal paper, in its effort to be explicit and exclusive. The prime question concerning this doctrine is, Is it according to the Holy Scriptures?

PROOF FROM THE SCRIPTURES OF MAN'S INABILITY TO GOOD.

God said to Adam in reference to the forbidden tree (Gen. ii. 17), "In the day that thou eatest thereof," *i. e.* in the day that thou sinnest, "thou shalt surely die." The truth of God, observation and experience testify that straightway upon man's disobedience this sentence was executed upon him. Accordingly Paul to the Ephesians (Eph. ii. 1-3), speaking of their natural state, calls them, "Dead in trespasses and sins"—a death which yet had about it activity, a freedom of death—"wherein," he continues, "in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

Shortly before the flood we read (Gen. vi. 3) that, "The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh:" and, a little after, that God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually:" and the Psalmist in two places (Ps. xiv. 2, 3; liii. 2, 3), wherein he is quoted by Paul to the Romans (Rom. iii. 10, sq.) as uttering a general truth, represents God as looking down from heaven "to see if there were any that did understand and seek God," and coming to the conclusion, in his perfect knowledge of all hearts, "They are all gone aside, they are together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one." Compare with this our Lord's words to Nicodemus (John iii. 6), "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," explaining his assertion, "Ye must be born again;" and Paul's contrast between "the flesh" and "the Spirit" and his delineations of the conflict between the two, meaning by "the flesh" not merely the body, or the sensuous nature, but the whole corrupt nature of fallen man. David in the fifty-first Psalm cries out, not in extenuation of his crime, but in illustration of his desperate need of God's grace, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5).

The whole tenor of the Old Testament shows on the one hand the absolute necessity of spiritual righteousness, and at the same time man's utter inability to attain to it: and thus makes man feel his need of, and prepares the way for redeeming grace in Christ.

Of the Jews of his day, so punctilious in outward observances, the Saviour said, quoting from Isaiah (Matt. xv. 8), "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me." And explained to his disciples that "Out of the heart proceed all the things that defile a man." Paul (Eph. iv. 17, 18) characterizes the unregenerate as walking "in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts."

(1 Cor. ii. 14 :) "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." See the whole of the passage in 1 Cor. i. 18 to ii. 6, in which it is set forth strongly that (1 Cor. i. 21), "After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Saul converted was sent to the Gentiles (Acts xxvi. 18) "To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Christ).

The state of the natural man respecting spiritual things is represented in the Scriptures as "darkness" (Eph. v. 8) and "The Light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John i. 5). And our Saviour says (Matt. vi. 23), "If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!" "Without me," says Christ to his disciples (John xv. 5), "ye can do nothing:" a statement confirmed by the illustration of the vine and the branches. A branch of the vine is of necessity incapable of bearing any fruit. (2 Cor. iii. 5 :) "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." (Rom. viii. 7 :) "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Hence, (John iii. 3), "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And (2 Cor. v. 17), "Therefore if any man be in

Christ he is a new creature:" and man can no more create himself anew than he could create himself at first. Of but One we say, "He can create, and He destroy!" (Eph. ii. 8:) Faith itself is declared to be "the gift of God." And (1 Cor. xii. 3), "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (Acts v. 31): Christ is declared to be exalted "to give repentance to Israel" as well as "forgiveness of sins." Paul admonishes Timothy to meekness and patience with men (2 Tim. ii. 25), "If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." To the Jews, so careful about external acts, having a righteousness of the law, or civil righteousness, which put them in esteem among men and for which they greatly esteemed themselves, the Saviour said (John viii. 31-36), "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." To which they indignantly replied, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed!"

We will let these citations suffice, though many more to the same purpose might be given.

The remedy for man's inability, thus so fully declared, the recovery to real freedom, is also in this article set forth by the Confessors. They declare that this power for spiritual righteousness "is accomplished in the heart when the Holy Spirit is received through the word." This means

#### REGENERATION AND CONVERSION.

These terms are often used synonymously: but it promotes clearer views to understand by the former the new birth, and by the latter the exhibitions of the new life in turning day by day from sin and Satan to holiness and God. The necessity for such change is evident from the natural state of fallen man as it has already been described, and from Scripture citations that have already been given, as well as others that might be quoted. But the point at which our Article touches this subject is not one concerning the fact of regeneration and conversion, but concerning the agency of their accomplishment.

The Pelagians taught that man by his own powers, without the grace of God, can turn himself to God, believe the gospel, work spiritual righteousness, and merit the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. The semi-Pelagians taught that man by his own powers can make a beginning of his conversion, but cannot complete it without God's grace. Others taught that whilst man is unable to make a beginning, yet, after a beginning is made by divine grace, man can by his own natural powers add, help and co-operate in the work of renewal.

The Confessors deny to man's natural powers any ability or share whatever, exercised in and of themselves, in this work. They ascribe it from beginning to end to the grace of God ministered by the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures say, "*Repent*"—but Christ gives repentance: the Scriptures say, "*Believe*"—but faith is the gift of God: the Scriptures enjoin perfect love, and declare one without love to be nothing, spiritually—but love is of God, and he that loveth is, and must first have been, born of God. It is the Holy Spirit that opens the blind eyes, illumines the darkened understanding, convincing man of sin: it is the Holy Spirit that awakens and elevates the affections, leading man to love what God loves and hate what God hates: it is the Holy Spirit that works in man to will and to do (Phil. ii. 13) of God's good pleasure, delivering the bond-servants of sin and introducing them into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. (Rom. viii. 21.) And he does this "through the word," the Holy Scriptures. "God the Holy Ghost effects conversion not without means; but uses for this purpose the preaching and hearing of God's word, as it is written (Rom. i. 16), 'The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' Also (Rom. x. 17), 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' With this word the Holy Ghost is present, and opens hearts, so that they, as Lydia in Acts xvi., are attentive to it and are thus converted."\* Thus at Pentecost Peter's hearers' hearts were pricked with contrition: and similarly Christ opened the hearts of the disciples going to Emmaus to understand the Scriptures.

"For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe" (1 Cor. i. 21). "Sanctify them by thy truth," prays our Lord; "thy word is truth" (John xvii. 17, 18).

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\*Form. Conc., Part I, 2.



Hence those who imagine that without means, without the word and the sacraments, the Holy Spirit illumines men, draws them to himself, justifies and sanctifies them, as well as those who think to attain these ends by their own preparation, feelings, struggles and works of whatever sort, are in error.

Now if it be asked what we are to make of the many invitations of the Scriptures inviting and urging men to accept God's grace, to come to Christ, to seek and strive, we answer that these refer to those external things which are within the power of man, such as to use the means God has provided, to read the word, to go to church, to give attention to spiritual things, while at the same time our Lord's word is still most true, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John vi. 44). But even those very invitations are drawing toward Christ, and in the use of the means one will find these drawings increasing more abundantly.

It was to a little girl whose spirit had just left her body (Lk. viii. 41-56) that Jesus said, "Maid, arise," and she arose straightway: it was to a young man whose corpse they were bearing to the grave (Lk. vii. 11-15) that Jesus said, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise"; and he that was dead sat up and began to speak: it was to a man who had been dead four days already and been buried (John xi. 39-44) that Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth," and he came out with his grave clothes bound about him. And these are but types of God's word to men "dead in trespasses and in sins," young and old, bidding them live: the words that Jesus speaks to them are spirit and life; and when his "I say unto you" comes to any one, there comes with it power to do the bidden thing. But the condition is, "If any man will hear his voice!" For the bad power of closing and hardening the heart belongs to man.

#### PREDESTINATION.

Here arises a question, at once philosophical and practical. How is it that, among those to whom the gospel is preached and God's grace offered, some are regenerated and converted, and others are not? If men are equally unable to do anything whatsoever toward this end, and are equally hostile to God, the logical deduction seems to be that the cause of the difference inquired into lies in God. Augustine accepted this conclusion and resorted to the theory of unconditional Predestination, based on the sovereignty of God.

God has from all eternity chosen a portion of mankind to be the recipients of his grace and salvation, and that irrespective of any foreseen faith or character in them, and has left the rest of mankind in their fallen, helpless and condemned condition. Moreover, to the chosen ones God's grace is an irresistible power, overcoming the utmost intensity of man's self-will and aversion.

It is just here that our Church parts company with Augustinianism. Having kept it close company all through the subject of Anthropology hitherto, here she draws the line and says, "Thus far, but no further." It is into this theological slough that our Missouri brethren have fallen, in the midst of which they are struggling, while Calvinists, creeping out at the sides, in amazement cry, "Are ye become like unto us?" and the Ohio and Wisconsin brethren are vigorously throwing stones at them, with reproaches for so besmirching the "*reine Lehre!*"

For whilst Luther and other individuals in Reformation times may have been extreme Predestinarians of the Augustinian type, this never was the doctrine of the Church. Among the points expressly condemned in the Formula of Concord are these:

1. When it is taught that God does not wish all men to repent and believe the gospel.
2. That, when God calls us to himself, he is not in earnest that all men should come to him.
3. That God does not wish every one to be saved, but, without regard to their sins, alone from the counsel, purpose and will of God, some are appointed to condemnation, so that they cannot be saved.

And the same authority declares:—That, however, "many are called, few are chosen," does not mean that God is unwilling that all should be saved, but the reason is that they either do not at all hear God's word, but willfully despise it, close their ears and harden their hearts, and in this manner foreclose the ordinary way to the Holy Ghost, so that he cannot effect his work in them, or, when it is heard, they consider it of no account, and do not heed it. For this [that they perish] not God or his election, but their wickedness, is responsible.\*

Paying less attention to logic and more to the Scriptures, our Church teaches that the reason why any to whom the gospel is

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\* Form. Conc., Part I, 11.

preached and grace is offered are not regenerated, converted and saved, is because they resist the Holy Ghost and refuse to accept the offered grace. For in evil we have seen that man has freedom of will, and he may by his own natural powers refuse and resist God's grace. And if it be said that the natural resistance of all men is alike and the same, we reply that there may be and is an additional, superadded, wilful resistance. For just as the regenerate man, through the power of the Holy Spirit, with which his renewed powers can and do now co-operate, goes on from grace to grace, from strength to strength, in that which is good, so the unregenerated, following the evil bent of his depraved mind through voluntary choices, goes on to more ungodliness: and so there are, from many occasions, differences in the voluntary character of unregenerate men. Moreover, God has too much respect for his creature man, to un-man him by forcing his will: God will not, to convert man, destroy his moral agency. And though the Scriptures speak of the natural heart as a hard and stony heart, and some of our theologians have expressed themselves very strongly in comparing the natural man to a block or stone or pillar of salt, yet, as the Formula of Concord (Part ii. 2) says, "God has a *modus agendi*, or way of working in a man, as in a rational creature, quite different from his way of working in another creature that is irrational, or in a stone and block." He treats him as a man, enlightens, beseeches, urges, threatens, but does not force him.

Said Christ to Jerusalem that had neglected and despised her day of grace (Matt. xxiii. 37), "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Stephen to the same generation said (Acts vii. 51), "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." To the Ephesians Paul says (Eph. iv. 30), "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God:" and to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. v. 19), "Quench not the Spirit." Man is regarded as so much harder for God to work upon than even a stone or block, in that he has this power of resisting God in spiritual things, which by their very nature must be voluntary.

Calvin, at the head of the Reformed Church, fully adopted the Augustinian theory of Predestination, and sought to bring over Melancthon to the same view: but the latter was horrified at the

doctrine, and called Calvin "the modern Zeno, who wanted to introduce a stoical necessity into the Church." Neander says that when Calvin sent him his confession of faith, Melancthon struck his pen through the whole passage on Predestination.\*

It was, probably, on account of his revulsion from this doctrine, and his sense of the logical tendency of a rigid monergism in that direction, that Melancthon, in his writings subsequent to the Augsburg Confession and the Apology, allowed that there was in man's natural powers "a faculty of applying himself to grace," and taught that there are three concurrent causes in man's regeneration and conversion, viz., the Word of God, the Holy Ghost, and the will of man. He made the non-resisting will of man an active factor. This teaching is seen in the 1835 and 1843 editions of his *Loci Theologici*. This co-operation of man by his natural powers in spiritual things is called synergism, and is condemned by the standards of our Church.

Says the Formula of Concord, "Conversion to God is a work of God, the Holy Ghost alone, who is the true master-workman that alone works this in us, for which he uses the preaching and hearing of his Holy Word as his ordinary means and instrument. But the understanding and will of the unregenerate man are nothing else than the *subjectivum convertendum*, *i. e.* that which is to be converted, as the understanding and will of a spiritually dead man, in whom the Holy Ghost works conversion and renewal, for which work the will of the man who is to be converted does nothing, but allows God alone to work in him, until he is regenerate; and then also by the Holy Ghost he works (co-operates) in other succeeding good works, that which is pleasing to God, in the way and to the extent fully set forth above." †

As has been said, the two tendencies, represented by Pelagius and Augustine, continue until this day. The Romish Church still teaches that man's moral nature was not totally depraved by the fall, but only weakened, and that, therefore, man can fit himself through his own moral power for the acceptance of justifying grace, and thus to a certain extent merit the same, and is able, after renewing justifying grace, not only to keep all God's commandments and

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\* See Neander: Hist. Christ. Dogmas, Vol. II.

† Form. Conc., Part II, 2.

through good works directly to merit eternal salvation, but even to perform works of supererogation. The Calvinistic and Arminian controversy has kept up the antagonism concerning the nature of man's inheritance from Adam, irresistible grace and predestination. And the modern Socinians and Rationalists, in advocacy of philanthropy and humanity, speak chiefly of the dignity and possibilities of man, exalting his merely natural powers, so detracting from the necessity and worth of God's grace.

It is not long since we heard a distinguished Unitarian divine,\* setting forth the tenets of his sect, extol their humanity, their reputation for education and culture, and say it was no part of their teaching to say or sing, "Oh, to be nothing, nothing," † but rather "Oh, to be something, *something!*"—a laudable ambition, indeed, if sought for in the only way by which man may recover his original freedom and greatness and attain even higher position than that. That man who, excepting the Perfect One, was "something" above any of whom history speaks, declares, "By the grace of God I am what I am!" But there was little or nothing heard of grace in the discourse or on the occasion of which we speak.

Indeed, the times are not characterized by deep sense of sin or helpless need of God's grace as offered in the Church of Christ. Men have not time to know themselves. The demands of business and of society are all-engrossing. God's word and ordinances are much slighted by indifference or haste. So that men come to feel that they do not need the Church; they can be as good without. And this, from the easy-going trifler who can worship God as well in the field as in the congregation of his people, and needs not the Bible, since it is no more inspired than all truth, nor the

\* Dr. Ware, of Boston, at dedication of All Souls' Church, Washington, D. C.

† The whole stanza reads :

Oh, to be nothing, nothing,  
Only to lie at his feet,  
A broken and emptied vessel,  
For the Master's use made meet.  
Emptied that he might fill me  
As forth to his service I go;  
Broken, that so unhindered,  
His life through me might flow.



sacraments, since they are too simple or or too supernatural to mean anything to him—to the educated, thinking apostles and devotees of culture, who think to attain the highest development by the exercise and discipline of their own natural powers.

Even in the Sunday school the young people are carelessly taught to sing such songs as "Only an armor-bearer," with its boastful, self-dependent chorus, "Surely the Captain can depend on me:" and these self-vaunting, subjective, rollicking songs claim equal place with such hymns as "I need Thee every hour, Most Gracious Lord," and, "More love to Thee, O Christ, more love to Thee," and, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee"—hymns born of a consciousness of human helplessness and the humble spirit of entire dependence on God, the God of our salvation.

The practical effect of our Church's teaching in the matter of Liberty and Grace should be, upon the unregenerate, to lead them to constantly use the means of grace, that they may be in the way of salvation, and, when Jesus of Nazareth passeth by, may have their eyes opened to see and know their Liberator, their Saviour; to make them fear lest, by neglecting and resisting the Holy Spirit, they may grieve him away and they be left forever in their helpless bondage to sin; that, when God calls, they may not refuse, and reject the counsel of God against themselves, to their everlasting death. And upon the regenerate the effect should be to make them diligent in the great business of life, quick to listen to and obey the Spirit's sanctifying influences, careful lest they receive the grace of God in vain, working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, while God works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure: and, on the other hand, to make them eager to bring to the knowledge of all people that sacred word through which the Holy Spirit enlightens, frees and sanctifies the heart, that all men may come, according to God's gracious will (1 Tim. ii. 4), to the knowledge of the truth and be saved.

# ARTICLE XIX.

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## THE CAUSE OF SIN.

BY S. A. REPASS, D. D.

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THE translation we employ is that made by Dr. Krauth and contained in his edition of the Augsburg Confession. It reads as follows :

“ Touching the cause of sin, they teach, that although God doth create and preserve nature, yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked ; to wit, of the devil, and ungodly men ; which will, God not aiding, turneth itself from God, as Christ saith, ‘ When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own,’ John viii. 44.”

The following is the original in Latin and German (Müller, *Symb. Bücher*) :

“ De causa peccata docent, quod tametsi Deus creat et conservat naturam, tamen causa peccati est voluntas malorum, videlicet diaboli et impiorum, quae, non adjuvante Deo, avertit se a Deo, sicut Christus ait, John 8. Quum loquitur mendacium, ex se ipso loquitur.”

“ Von Ursach der Sünden wird bei uns gelehret, dass, wiewohl Gott der Allmächtige die ganze Natur geschaffen hat und erhält, so wirket doch der verkehrte Wille die Süde in allen Bösen und Veraächtern Gottes, wie denn des Teufels Wille ist und aller Gottlosen, welcher alsbald, so Gott die Hand abgethan, sich von Gott zum argen gewandt hat, wie Christus spricht, John viii. 44. Der Teufel redet Lügen aus seinem eigen.”

“ The article belongs to those held by the Christians in common, embracing a truth confessed alike by Greek and Roman Catholic, no less than by every type of Protestantism. It also falls among the conservative articles, those held by the Lutheran Church in their purity, over against the corruptions of Rome, Radicalism, Rationalism in all its forms, the various phases of imperfect theology, as well as against every school of anti-Christian philosophy.” \* While

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\* Conservative Ref. p. 255.

truth is consistent in its unvarying opposition to error in all its protean forms it does not decline to acknowledge truth wherever found. Fidelity to itself is its highest governing principle. All can be done and endured that does not involve a sacrifice of itself. It has allies in Rome, Geneva, and Oxford, and recognizing the position of supreme importance it occupies, is as ready to question the *dicta* of philosophy as those of theology. But to conclude a concordat with error under whatever form or name it may assume, or whatever be the character of the associations in which it may be found, would be to jeopardize its own life. To truth self-consistency is the highest law.

The phraseology of the article as expressed in the Latin and German involves shades of meaning which, while not contradictory, may yet claim attention in our analysis. The precise extension of the word "nature" as employed in the Latin in the clause, "God creates and preserves nature," is not at first view entirely apparent. The immediate connection would indicate a restricted meaning, confining the word to human nature; God preserves the nature in which sin originates, and through which it is traduced. The import of the German in the article is wholly comprehensive. "God hath created and preserveth the whole universal nature" (*die ganze Natur*). That a real difference in the thought finds expression here is by no means asserted. What in the one is stated most concisely is in the other given in language which refers the divine preservation to all that God has created. That this is the true sense of the term most accurately harmonizes with the article as a whole, and at the same time excludes as the cause of sin, not only God himself, but all that he has created, nature in its universal extent, referring its origin solely and entirely to the will of the rational creature. While this Article was framed "expressly for the purpose of denying the divine causation of sin, and for refuting the imputations of Catholic opponents," it was framed in language that opposes the concealed Materialism no less than the Pelagianism of the Romish system. Nor does it any less reach and exclude the Pantheism of some of the earlier scholastics. The "division of nature" made by Scotus Erigena is essentially that of Spinoza, and serves as the basis of most of the later forms of Pantheism. Evangelical Protestantism as formulated at Augsburg is scarcely less characterized by its far-reaching comprehensiveness in the exclusion of error than in the

purity and clearness with which it expresses the truths of Holy Scripture touching the central articles of the Christian faith.

The aim of the confessors is strictly evangelical and practical, and while keeping in view as immeasurably more important than all else their living testimony to the pure word of God, the truth they held and defended anticipates and excludes the errors philosophical and speculative of the subsequent ages. Standing in living connection with the early church, and with the true church in every succeeding period, in the pure faith of the Gospel, they no less really witness against the error and heresy which have grown up in and alongside the earthly form of the kingdom of God. Theirs is a confession of truth, that revealed truth which is in its very nature central and exclusive, living and powerful, reaching alike to the past and into the future, and vindicating its authority by a consistent testimony through all the ages. What may not have been consciously in the mind of the confessors was yet present in the truth to which they had pledged their lives, and in the defense of this they stood the avowed enemies of error in all its forms. And so to understand and defend their testimony is directly in the interest of a true historic development.

Viewed in this light the clause of the Article under consideration involves the theistic conception concerning the origin and continued preservation and government of the universe of nature. God, by a free, direct, conscious act of will brought into being all that has existence apart from himself. And he no less certainly preserves, or constantly upholds and continues in being the universe he has created. Creation involves and logically necessitates providence, which is in its nature a continued creation. The eternity, or the self-existence of the creature contradicts alike reason and fact.

The clause, "which will, God not aiding" ("non adjuvante Deo"), to which corresponds the German, "So Gott die Hand abgethan," does not, in the two languages in which the Confession was originally framed, at first view express the same idea. According to the former (the Latin) God in no sense, and to no degree, participates in the commission of sin. It is the act wholly and entirely "of the will of the wicked," and, whether viewed in its internal or external aspects, God neither causes nor concurs in it in its character as sin. The German, when its phraseology is closely considered, appears to view sin as consequent upon the momentary withdrawal of the di-

vine gracious power. The translator of Schalt's Augsburg Confession renders this clause as follows: "Which, as soon as divine aid is withdrawn, turneth from God unto evil." The translator of Müller's "Christian Doctrine of Sin" turns the same phrase into this language: "Which, when God withdrew his hand, turned from God to evil." The sense is the same in both translations, and they give what certainly appears to be the most natural and accurate meaning of the original. That the divine power does not repress this act of sin is most certainly true, in which view the same takes place under the permission of God. The Latin is susceptible of the English rendering "Without God's furthering this turning away from him." The German, however, will hardly bear a translation in harmony with that idea. While the words of the one seem framed to exclude the entire participation of the divine action in the production of sin, the other most naturally accounts for sin by the withdrawal of that grace, without which man, even in his primeval innocence, could do nothing good. It is most certainly true that the grace of God was an essential constituent factor of man prior to the fall. Neither grace nor righteousness was a *donum superadditum* to the first Adam, as Scholasticism avers. On the contrary, he was created in righteousness with grace as the distinguishing basis of his nature. The momentary withdrawal of that grace would necessitate the fall, and thus make God, at least indirectly, the author of sin. According to this view God decrees sin, and brings it into existence in the way of his own ordering. This is itself Supralapsarianism. It denies the conclusion logically following its own premises, but not without precipitating an age-long controversy in the interest of a theory at variance alike with the word of God and the conscience of man.

It is not denied that the varying language of these two copies of our Confession may be so construed as to harmonize with each other. But to purchase such a reconciliation by sacrificing the plainest principles of criticism cannot be allowed, much less commended. That the views of Melancthon underwent a change touching truths closely related to that contained in this article is quite easily shown. The statement is made by Julius Müller that "from the year 1532, in the new edition of his commentary on Romans, "he began to break through the magic circle whose primary premise is unconditional predestination." In the *Variata* he puts



*contra mandata Dei* for *non adjuvante Deo*, which cannot be regarded as an explanation. To understand them as synonymous, or to employ them interchangeably, would be to violate the morality of language. It is well known that the German of the Confession in the Book of Concord is only a copy of the original of Melancthon, and made before that Confession had assumed the exact form in which it was actually presented to the Diet. It is not affirmed that the discrepancy in the clause under consideration, as this appears in the comparison of the two languages, is due to the less mature character of the German copy. It cannot, however, be denied that, in their earlier experience as Reformers, both Luther and Melancthon were profoundly influenced by the study of Augustine. Turning away from the Pelagianism of Rome, and the loose morality naturally growing from its entire system of work-righteousness, these earnest spirits sought communion with the early Christian Fathers, among whom none was entitled to more veneration than the pious, learned and able bishop of Hippo. That his views concerning predestination were entertained in the earlier stages of the Reformation, as well as his teaching touching sin and grace, appears prominently in their writings. According to Augustine the divine "predetermination presupposes the free act of man by which sin gains an entrance into human nature." It came within the range of the divine foreknowledge, although that foreknowledge possesses no causative force. In this respect his view resembles that of the late Infralapsarians. While the Supralapsarianism of the Synod of Dort may be the logical result of the principles of Augustine, reaching the absolute extreme that the Fall was decreed of God, the clearly expressed views of the African bishop stand in open opposition to this latter development. That the Augsburg Confession, as also the later symbols of the Lutheran Church, is in direct antagonism to the Dordrecht deliverance on this subject demands no proof at our hands. And that an unconditional or absolute predestination of men to salvation and eternal life is taught or implied in the Lutheran confessional writings can only be maintained by those who are intent rather upon new issues than satisfied with holding fast that which they have. Nothing of this error, nor indeed of kindred errors, lies even in concealment, in the phraseology under consideration. But the form of expression contained in the German certainly needs to be interpreted in the clearer light of the Latin

original. This latter gives expression to the fuller, and, as regards form, more correct thought of the Confessors, and is that which finds more complete statement in the later symbols of the Church. The German indicates a less mature development in the line of dogmatic thought and formulæ. Had these faithful witnesses for the truth possessed more time for the preparation of our Confession, its form, matchless as it is for simplicity, and perspicuity, would have undergone still further changes. That these would have reached and affected the clause before us cannot be affirmed. It is maintained that the apparent discrepancy is removed by keeping in mind the special aim of the Confessors in this article, viz., that they had in view actual sins more particularly, as the outworking of original or originating sin.

By the doctrine of justification through faith they penetrated to the heart of the Romish system, and discovered its deep corruption. In its desperate defence the Papacy charged upon the Reformers, that, in denying the meritorious value of good works, they encouraged sinning, and depreciated holiness. It was then, and is still alleged, that to impute righteousness to the sinner would be an imputation upon the holiness of God. In the fresh and exultant joy of Luther over the fear of death and hell they profess to see an indifference to sin and sanctification. And in that confusion and unquietness which surely follow upon "envy and strife" they were alike ready to defame God and his servants, if they might only maintain their own wicked cause. Against such malice and falsehood these godly men defended both God and his truth. Sin, wherever found, and by whomsoever committed, was not of God, but of the will of the wicked. While he preserved and upheld nature he did not cause, nor concur in the sinful act. The will is not aided by him in its actual alienation. Sin is the product of the will in its estranged acts. When his hand is withdrawn it turns from God. Whether this be understood in the sense, that he does not by his power prevent the sin, but permits it; or that he stands entirely apart from participation in the sinful act. The language is strong and positive in its affirmation of the holiness of God. He might prevent the act of murder, and by an exercise of his power palsy the arm that is lifted against the life of a fellow man; or by his wisdom he could frustrate that wicked purpose. If he does neither, the murderous act is wholly that of the man. Morally God is infinitely removed from any participation in the deed committed.

But this restricted application of the Article to actual sin, even should it be justified or demanded, does not confine the truth to sins of this nature. And since it has reference to the cause, of sin, and not to its nature, we are sure that its most comprehensive application to the origin of sin in general is justified by the spirit of the Article.

That the clause, "the cause of sin is the will of the wicked," does not imply that these were originally wicked, is evident from the language just considered. Neither in the case of the unfallen creature does the will become wicked before it commits sin. The state of the will is antecedent to all acts of the will, internal and external, but in the case of Adam's fall that act did at the same time constitute the "turning away from God," the transition from a condition of holiness to one of sinfulness. When the first sin was conceived, and before it came to the birth, it was the product, the act of the will, which in that very instance became wicked. The truth of the statement is based upon the nature of the will of him whom God made upright, even "in his own image."

It is equally true that this Article contains a general statement which is applicable to sin in all its subsequent forms. Touching its cause, whether in the angel world, in the fall of Adam, or in the depraved condition of his posterity in its fixed state of alienation from the divine law, sin originates in "the will of the wicked." It owes its existence at first to this source, and having secured place in human nature, as well as in the universe of God, it continues to *become*, to live and grow, in the perverted will of the moral creature. The language is generic in character, containing an all-embracing declaration concerning the cause of sin.

We have again in this Article a most striking instance of the strictly practical aim of the Confessors. No subject has excited more profound and earnest thought, philosophical or speculative. The mightiest intellects of many of the best men have struggled long and patiently in order to make clear to themselves the origin of this mystery, and to harmonize its possibility or permission with the power and holiness of God. Of these not a few have returned from their researches, acknowledging their inability to solve the problem they had undertaken. None of these indeed charge the existence of sin directly to God himself, yet how it originated? whence? and why? are beyond their power to determine. But

none of these questions trouble the Confessors. They cannot be drawn aside into speculative disquisitions, however interesting or inviting they may appear, or suffer themselves to be lured from the serious end they have in view. Their aim is wholly moral and practical. Guided by their reverence for the divine word, and in their supreme desire to know and confess it, they proceed at once to the heart of the subject, reaching the positive statement, that, not God, but the "will of the wicked" is the cause of sin. The conclusion reached is not by way of philosophy, or human speculation. It is in no sense excogitated, or thought out independently of the positive and clear utterances of the word of revelation. Rather, yea altogether, is it found in that word after diligent and pious searching, and their labor is confined to that of discovering the clearest and truest human expression for what God has revealed concerning it. The results attained must be held to harmonize with those of a true philosophy, but beginning at the centre, and resting satisfied with the facts as there made known, they leave to the former its circuitous method of finding truth. They need fear no conflict with philosophy who are guided by the word of God. All truth and fact are practical, existing for moral ends. These confessors at Augsburg revered the divinely given word supremely. This was the source and the conditioning law of all their investigations and conclusions. To know what that said and required, and faithfully to formulate the same as the rule of life and faith, was the one design animating them in their patient labors. With how much of authority should not this fact clothe their utterances!

Concerning the positive statement of the article proper, it is affirmed that "God *creates* and *preserves* nature." God creates. This is over against Atheism, which altogether denies the Divine existence, and affirms the eternity of matter. There can be no *creation* where there is no God. The language is just as certainly exclusive of all forms of Pantheism, earlier and later. Neither universal substance, nor universal thought, is the underlying entity or cause of all things. To Pantheism God is no more than a name for the unseen, unconscious forces operating by necessity in nature. God possesses neither freedom nor personality. "To my mind God is the immanent (that is, the intramundane), and not the transcendent (that is, the supramundane), cause of all things; that is, the totality of finite objects is posited in the essence of God; and not in



his *will*.”\* According to this view God exists of necessity in the world, and possesses no living activity out of and beyond it. There is here no room for creation, for a free creative “let there be.” All is bound in an endless chain of causation, and from eternity to eternity substance and form constitute the whole of universal necessary existence. This theory, logical enough, if its fundamental premise, viz., that of the existence of universal substance, be admitted, is dishonoring alike to God, and the free creature, man. There can be no creation in the absolute and only true sense of the term when there is no free personal God. Materialism, in its denial of the existence of spirit, is likewise led to deny, and logically, the fact of creation. Nothing exists save matter, and this forever. Neither God nor spiritual personality has place in this system, and upon this basis to maintain the doctrine of creation would be to contradict the axiom “*ex nihilo nihil fit*.”

It is also affirmed in the Article that God “preserves universal nature.” This is over against the varying forms of Deism and Rationalism. The whole texture of the Article under review consists with the doctrine of a constant, active providence of God in the world he has made. As this came into being through an omnipotent act of God, its existence is that of created dependence upon its author. The universe considered as a whole, or in its several parts, is not a structure so perfect as to be able to continue apart from the upholding hand that gave it being. The power calling it into existence lives in and sustains it through every succeeding moment. Even what are known as inherent laws and forces of nature are no more than living modes of the divine activity, continuing and conditioning all that exists. Deism is justly chargeable with prime inconsistency in allowing a miracle at the commencement of the world, and then affirming the divine indifference or inactivity in its subsequent existence. God could not, as he would not, create and leave alone. This would contradict both his being and work. In maintaining the fact and the necessity of the preservation of nature by God, these Reformers affirmed a truth in keeping with the highest philosophy, no less than with the uniform teachings of Holy Scripture.

It is not asserted that these affirmations are made with these or other kindred errors in mind. They scarcely had existence as for-

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\* Spinoza.



mulated systems at the time when our Confession was framed. The errors against which the Article was directed were practical in their form and nature. They lived in the church, and were excluded by the word and spirit of the revelation of God. Against these the Article was specially and primarily aimed. But truth is all-pervasive and all-comprehensive. It reaches beyond the consciousness of those who confess it. All ages and systems belong to its domain. The errors of the past are discovered, and those of the future anticipated, while neither the one nor the other may be present to the mind of its witnesses. Moving exclusively in the circle of what was revealed for human life and salvation, the Confessors stood in a living centre whose periphery was all-inclusive. Error has appeared in new forms, and may continue to deck itself in garish colors of which they knew and thought nothing. But living and abiding in that truth which is in its very nature omnipresent, and which they held and confessed, is concealed latent or open opposition to every error. Thus do these men of God, and their brethren of every age, stand as the defenders and witnesses of the truth.

But, returning to the more special thought of the clause of the Article before us, we find here the cause of nature and that of sin placed in the sharpest possible contrast. The point of the affirmation is to distinguish between the cause of sin in the moral creature, and God who creates and sustains all things. This upholding power of God certainly extends to "all and singular" that he has made. It is not to nature apart from man that the divine preservation is limited. Neither is it to the body in its functions apart from the mind that God extends his care and providence. All are alike dependent upon him, since he made all. His arm is as active in sustaining, as his eye watchful in guiding his works. Self-dependence characterizes nothing, yea, is possible to nothing created. To create and leave alone would be to uncreate; or to impart to the creature a divine attribute. That God could not do; it would involve a contradiction both in the act and the author. The very will in its sinning is sustained by God. Were he to withdraw his hand, even from the wicked in their wickedness, they would instantly cease to exist. Is it not true, that the providence of God reaches its highest and most distinguishing activity in the preservation of the will even in its apostate condition? That it should embrace the corporeal nature of the moral creature, which is the merely unconscious organ

of the mind, of the will, is not so high and singular an exhibition of the divine activity. But that the will, even in its perverted acts and state, yea, that even devils are included in this all-searching, all-encompassing divine energy, is surely to exhaust no less the powers of conception and language in the endeavor to comprehend and express it. How clear and vast the thought of the Psalmist: "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, *and thy right hand shall hold me.*"

The truth involved in the negative statement, God is not the cause of sin, is universally accepted. No system maintains the opposite, certainly none that admits the reality of sin, or that it is opposed to and hated of God. On the contrary, the various methods of explaining its origin, and of reconciling its existence with the goodness and justice of God, are largely devised and employed in order to protect him against this very imputation. However much of the logic of theologians and philosophers may have been at fault in the reasoning employed to uphold and define their systems, none has charged God with being the author of sin. Conscience and reason alike testify to the holiness of the divine character, albeit the divine being may be regarded both powerless and indifferent concerning its existence. And with this testimony harmonize throughout the teachings of Holy Scripture. That God is intrinsically holy, that he hates sin with a perfect hatred, and that it exists in the most complete and absolute contrast to his very nature and being, is apparent upon every page of our inspired scriptures. These are no less a revelation of sin than of salvation, and in both are displayed the all-searching holiness of our God. Dwelling "in light unto which no man can approach," yet existing in and sustaining all that he has made, "he cannot look upon sin," and hates it with an infinite hatred. The law given on Sinai was such an embodiment and revelation of the holiness of God that sinning and rebellious Israel was led to exclaim, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die." To make evident this attribute of his being to his chosen people, as also to the nations who were left to walk in their own ways, God visited them with the most fearful punishments, threatening them even with impending destruction. There are in fact not a few passages in the Psalms and Prophets, which seem to reveal God in the aspect of a

being who delights in vengeance upon his creatures, one who takes pleasure in hearing the impotent cries, and in beholding the hapless victims of his rigorous justice. The complete destruction of the Canaanites, the overthrow of nation by nation, marked by remorseless, unrelenting war and bloodshedding, and this constituting so large a portion of the history of ancient nations; the repeated and severe punishment sent upon his own people—all appear as so many evidences of an almighty, yet vindictive being, who finds delight in causing suffering and death. But what are these more than the just judgment of a God who “cannot look upon sin,” whose very wrath is the pure expression of holiness, and all of whose goings forth are in the interest and defense of truth and righteousness. Ours is a race whose history is characterized by apostasy and positive rebellion against God. This constitutes the dark background to all the suffering, the punishment, the wars of extermination that have been allowed and sent of God upon individuals and nations. And to fail of comprehending history in the light of this truth is to fail to understand aright both God and history. According to this view the history of the world is its judgment. How then could God cause that which he so hates? Could he so array his actions against his being as to direct his entire revelation of himself, in history, no less than in his word, against that to which he gave existence? Since the one truth he seeks to impress upon his creatures is that of his infinite holiness, his absolute hatred of sin in nature and act, surely its origin cannot be found in him. Nay, even that which he seeks to produce in his moral creatures is a will like to that of his own, which is averse to sin. Not content with guarding the holiness of his own character against all sin, he is infinitely active in the work of counteracting its presence and influence in the world he has made and preserves. “The fear of the Lord is to hate sin.” By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.” “A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil.” “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” But why multiply passages from a book whose prime claim to authenticity and credibility is the holiness of God, and his absolute separateness from sin?

And just as certainly are all the works of God, as originally made by him, good, created without sin. Evil does not exist as the mere limitation or imperfection of the creature, for "God made man upright." He cannot himself be holy if he gave being to a creature to whom sin is in any sense or to any degree a necessity. When Adam came from his hand he was pure from all evil, a just moral reflection of his maker. The world, when created, was pronounced by God, in its parts, and as a whole, "very good." He no more caused sin in his work, in anything created, than he is himself sinful. Existence in all its forms, conscious and unconscious, matter and spirit, was, when made, "very good." To be the cause, even indirectly, of sin in the creature, would involve, and inexorably, sinfulness in himself. "God cannot be tempted of evil," and therefore cannot produce it in another.

These statements do not need confirmation from any other source. They stand so clearly in the light of scripture and reason, and so bear witness to their own truthfulness, that they cannot be questioned. And yet in a paper of this character it is deemed both relevant and just to adduce the testimony of later confessors and theologians. In the Epitome, under the Article concerning original sin, the rejection and condemnation of the Manichæan heresy, as then held by Flacius, is expressed in this language: "We reject and condemn also as a Manichæan error, the doctrine that original sin is properly, and without any distinction, the substance, nature, and essence itself of the corrupt man, so that no distinction between the corrupt nature, considered by itself, since the Fall, and original sin, can be conceived of, nor can they be conceived of even in thought." Again: "The distinction between God's work and that of the devil is thereby designated in the clearest way, because the devil can create no substance, but can only in an accidental way, from God's decree (God permitting) corrupt a substance created by God." And under the treatment of the same Article in the "Solid Declaration" we have statements alike clear and specific. While Manichæism did not affirm that God was the author of sin, yet in maintaining that it is a necessary property of matter it did implicate him in its existence, from the point of view of the Scriptures as held and believed by these Confessors. The rejection of the error of Flacius was a direct vindication of the holiness of the divine character. To regard sin either as a substance, or as an assential property of nature,



was to impair the perfect holiness of God. These later Confessions are replete with similar declarations equally emphatic.

The individual utterances of our theologians stand in singularly clear agreement with these confessional statements. In fact, how like commentaries upon these symbols do they appear throughout? "God is not the cause of sin, nor is sin a thing continued or ordained by him, but it is a horrible destruction of the divine work and order."\* "God is in no manner the efficient cause of sin; neither in part nor in whole, neither directly nor indirectly, neither accidentally nor really (*per se*) (*per accidens*); whether in the forms of Adam's transgressions or in that of any other sin, God is not, neither can he be called, the cause or author of sin. God is not the cause of sin, (1) physically and *per se*, because thus the evil or sin has no cause; (2) nor morally, by commanding, persuading, or approving, because he does not desire sin, but hates it; nor (3) by way of accident, because nothing can happen to God either by chance or fatuitously. This conflicts with the divine wisdom, prescience, goodness, holiness, and independence, as is proved from Ps. v. 5; xlv. 7; Is. lxxv. 12; Zech. viii. 17; I John i. 5; James i. 13, 17."† Verily, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

Whence then is sin? How did it originate? What is its cause? These questions are answered in the Article in language at once positive and clear. "The cause of sin is the will of the wicked; to wit, of the devil and ungodly men; which will, God not aiding, turneth itself from God." These Confessors are singularly careful to maintain the sovereign providence of God over all that he has made, as well as vindicating him against any and all complicity in the sin of his creatures. He cannot let them pass from his hand; neither is he, nor can he be, partaker in their sins. In the clause, "which will, God not aiding," it is implied that he preserves the will of the wicked even in its sinful state and acts. But the sin itself, both that of origin, and its consequences, is not of God, but of the wicked will of the moral creature. Sin has its cause in "the will turning itself from God." The language of the Article taken throughout is so framed as to embrace and maintain this very truth, viz., that the activity which man perverts is of God. Distinguishing between the will as to its nature and essence as created by God, and

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\* Mel. Loc. Theol. Quoted from Schmid's Dogmatics.

† Quenstedt, in Schmid's Dogmatics.



its abuse or perversion, yea between the activity of the will and the moral character of those activities, it declares that God is in no sense the cause of sin. Between the will considered as created and preserved by God, preserved since the fall no less than before, and sin, the distinction is clear and unmistakable. In the sense stated, God even concurs with the will in its sin, but not with the sin itself. And to impute this to him, or to implicate him in any manner, or to any degree, with the sin itself would be to place oneself within the range of that declaration of the Christ, "the lie is of the devil."

But still the question recurs, how can a holy creature, much more one created holy, and created in a state of dependence upon God—how can this one fall, and thereby cause sin? To make the answer clear to the understanding is difficult. The question has been a perplexing one from the earliest times, and most perplexing to those who have thought and reasoned most profoundly. It has been indeed a *crux* of thought through the ages. That it is susceptible of complete rational demonstration is not indeed claimed. This has been and will continue to be an arena of conflict until the unsolved problems of this life stand out clearly in the light of eternity.

It cannot be irrelevant to refer to some of the theories employed to explain this difficulty. While these in general contradict each other, and cannot be maintained by those who hold as authoritative the teachings of Scripture, they still testify to the difficult nature of the question, as well as to the interest cherished by the human mind in reaching a conclusion that will satisfy itself. That it possesses more than a speculative interest cannot be questioned.

Manichaeism finds the solution to the question in two eternal principles. Evil has no beginning. Its existence in this world is only another stage of that conflict with the Good which has been in progress throughout the past eternity. The system itself had its origin with Manes. While the principles are no doubt older than this heresiarch, having been borrowed from the Pagan philosophers of the pre-Christian era, he was the first to formulate the same into a system. Its theoretical part, its metaphysics, was chiefly derived from the old Parsism; its partical part, its morals, chiefly from the neighboring Buddhism. From Christianity it took only some few loose ideas; but the whole method of combining all those materials, and fixing them into one coherent system, it borrowed from Gnosticism.\* Beginning his mission about 242 A. D. he gave himself

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\* See Manichaeism in Schaff-Herzog.

out as a messenger from God. "What Buddha was to India, Zoroaster to Persia, Jesus to the lands of the West, that I am to the country of Babylonia." The system was not presented as a power to save man, "but, like Gnosticism, it simply proposed to gratify his craving for knowledge by explaining the very problem of his existence." Its fundamental principle was that of Dualism. The world had its origin in the accidental mixing of two absolutely contrasting substances, or elements, the good and evil. "The first movement towards this intermingling arose from Satan within the realm of darkness." To meet this attack the *homo primus* was created by the God of light, "and all that follows, the course of the universe, the history of the human race, the life of the individual soul, etc., is nothing but a consistent evolution of this first encounter." The feigned conversation between Melissus and Zoroaster, given by Bayle in his Philosophical Dictionary, attests the strength of the system when its overthrow is undertaken by *a priori* reasoning. The argument of Melissus, "that the necessary Being is not bounded, and therefore infinite and almighty, and consequently one," is well met by simply arraying against it the fact of sin in the world. This cannot have its origin in God, who is infinitely good, and the argument referring its existence to an eternal principle of evil is quite as consistent with reason, apart from the word of God, as that which traces it to an act of the creature. But while doubting that the question can be solved by arguments *a priori*, specially while reason remains unenlightened by revelation, does Manichaeism really account for the origin of evil? It concerns itself mainly, if not indeed entirely, with stating the fact of the presence of sin in the world, accounting for its existence here upon a hypothesis devised to meet the very difficulty in question. But instead of furnishing a reply to the inquiry concerning the *cause of sin*, it points to its bold assumption that it existed forever. This is not the *exposition* of the embarrassing question at all; it is plainly an *imposition* upon the moral consciousness, upon all serious reasoning. Is it not matter of rejoicing that we have a positive answer in the revealed word, and that with this agrees the profoundest philosophy?

The theory of the pre-existence of souls in an extra-temporal state explains the origin of evil by referring it to a fall which took place prior to life in the body. Evil here is only a manifestation of what occurred in an ante-mundane apostasy. Socrates is introduced

as maintaining it in the *Phædon* of Plato; and it is by him ascribed to Orpheus as its original author. That it was held by Plato, Philo, and from these received and defended by Origen, is well established. It was part of the theory of these, that souls were incarcerated in bodies in this world as a punishment for their sin committed in a pre-existent state. Julius Müller, in his great work on the "Christian Doctrine of Sin," defends the same view, though it is but just to him to state that he rejects that form of the theory mentioned above. That the hypothesis has explicit scriptural warrant can hardly be claimed by its defenders. It is an assumption devised likewise to clear up this mystery of sin. It is open to the fundamental objection to Manichæism, and is characterized by even less of consistency. Replying to this theory, it has been forcibly said: "The hypothesis merely draws the veil over the great difficulty it was designed to solve. The difficulty arises, not from the circumstance that evil exists in the present state of our being, but from the fact that it is found to exist anywhere, or in any state, under the moral administration of a perfect God. It is as difficult to conceive why such a being should have permitted the soul to sin in a former state of existence, even if such a state were an established reality, as it is to account for its rise in the present world. To remove the difficulty out of sight, by transferring the origin of evil beyond the sphere of visible things, is a poor substitute for a solid and satisfactory solution of it. The great problem of the moral world is not to be illuminated by any such fictions of the imagination, and we had better let it alone altogether, if we have nothing more rational and solid to advance."\* This is certainly an explanation that stands in very great need of explanation itself; and to leave off inquiry just where a true inquiry should begin, is to commit violence both to philosophy and religion.

Supralapsarianism refers the Fall, and thereby indirectly all sin, to the divine decree. This decree was eternal and absolute, conditioned in no sense by foreknowledge of the acts of the free creature. What takes place in time is no more than the necessary unfolding of what was proposed and existent in the mind of God from eternity. The Fall was decreed as a means to the execution of the eternal counsel concerning redemption. Man stood originally in and

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\* Bledsoe's Theodicy.

by grace. His state of dependence upon God was real and complete. That the Fall might ensue, grace was withdrawn. Both in the angel-world and in this, the apostasy was necessarily consequent upon the temporary withholding of the divine gracious hand. Here indeed we have an explanation, but one that makes God the author of sin. To the praise of the defenders of this view be it said, that they do most zealously repudiate this conclusion. But in laying down and maintaining the premises of the argument they are in some just sense responsible for the result. Neither Calvin, nor Beza, nor Edwards, has been able by the arts or force of logic to evade that conclusion. If Adam was placed or left in a state from which he could not but fall into sin, and yet God be in no sense the author of it, then indeed might David plead that he was not guilty of the blood of Uriah. And as well could a human parent hold his helpless babe over a precipice, and withdraw his hand, suffering it to be crushed to death upon the rocks beneath, and still claim that he was not its murderer, as could the Almighty God bear his child where it must and of necessity suffer a still greater fall. No! in rejecting the main premises, no less than the conclusion of the argument, we are but vindicating the character of God against the imputation that he is the cause of sin. Nor will we allow here the misapplication of that Scripture, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" To the declarations of that word we yield implicit authority, but to its misuse in the support of an unscriptural theory, *never*.

There are views of sin, growing from certain systems of philosophy, which may claim notice in passing. Materialism and Pantheism, the latter existing in various modifications, are allied in this, that they deny free personality either to God or man, as well as supra-mundane existence to the former. These do not, and cannot, admit the reality of sin as sin. It exists as a mere privation, or as the necessary limitation of the rational creatural life, and makes the inherent imperfection that belongs, and essentially, to all that has finite existence. According to this view in its varying phases the fall was no more than the transition from a state of nature to that of freedom. Instead of regarding Paradise as the cradle of the human race, around which guardian angels protectingly hover, it was merely a park of wild beasts. Escape from it was deliverance from a condition of bondage, and necessary that man might attain to liberty. Sin is no more than a vanishing point in the development of



consciousness, or marking the immature stage and condition in the growth of the creature. The names of Spinoza, Hegel, Fichte, stand in general connection with this view. It has been maintained also by Schleiermacher and Leibnitz, although by the last named in a less objectionable form. These views are in common characterized by the denial, implied or expressed, of the Scripture doctrine of sin. And where its cause is traced to the will it exists of necessity in the very nature of that will. The statement of the article that sin exists as sin, really and essentially, and consists "in the will of the wicked turning away from God," arrays itself against all these speculative philosophies. It is not a necessity but a perversion of the free creature.

The article locates the cause of sin "in the will of the wicked." That the language expresses or implies a clear understanding of the mystery of the will in its relation to sin is not claimed. Philosophers of the acutest intellect, ancient and modern, and theologians possessing the profoundest learning, as well as the subtlest powers of analysis, have acknowledged their inability to master its solution. This should certainly beget humility in any one who approaches the question. Human reason is finite, limited on all sides to a narrow sphere. He who essays most in investigating difficult problems can appreciate that remark of Claudius, 'that reason was given in order to show man his ignorance, as the law to convince him of sin.' Certainly on this question his very best efforts fall short of complete comprehension. But that we have the truth in the statement may be accepted with confidence. The cause cannot be in God, for he is intrinsically holy. Holiness guards all the divine perfections, yea, it is the very citadel to his being. It cannot be concrete with spirit or matter, for these likewise derive their existence from him. Nor can it be consequent upon the union of the two, for this would also charge it, at least indirectly, upon God. Nor is it "from the relationship of liberty to nature, nor from the conception of the world—historical development of liberty, nor from the divine decree, nor from the created nor uncreated, that the necessity of evil can be deduced." \* How can anything more than its *possibility* be demonstrated? Or where can it be found, but in the perversion of the will of the rational creature?

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\* Martensen's Christian Dogmatics.



The difficulties and even objections that may be alleged to this view are not valid against its truth. We may and do accept as true what may be open to objection. A complete understanding is not necessary to assured conviction. That we have truth, and are assured of its possession, does not imply that the intellect consciously holds it in its completeness. In this state of relativity nothing exists beyond the reach of a measure of doubt and uncertainty. That difficulties lie along the lines of thought we may be pursuing would not justify retreat; otherwise skepticism would be the highest philosophy. Variations in the course of planets may indicate to the astronomer the existence of systems beyond the range of the telescope, but this does not invalidate the accepted fact that our sun is the centre of the worlds to which we are related. To have and hold truth as an intellectual possession, unmixed with doubt of any kind and from any source, is not possible in this world of limitation. That "we know only in part" is true of all knowledge, and to urge this as an objection would be to claim for the present state the perfection of that in which we "shall know even as we are known." That the cause of sin is the will of the wicked we maintain to be a truth of reason no less than of faith. Leaving these doubts to the care of those who hold them, let us inquire somewhat more closely into the cause of sin in its relation to the nature of will.

What is sin? We would not dare seek after a better definition than that given in the word of God, viz., "sin is the transgression of the law." But as our present inquiry concerns the nature of the will in its relation to sin, rather than the statements of Scripture touching the latter, we are justified in using a definition better suited to the point of view under consideration. And to this none is more satisfactory than that employed by Martensen, viz., "Sin is a false relation of existence." As such it is neither exclusively a creature nor an accident, but a perversion of the creature-will along the line of a false independence, a life away from God, which is itself death. All things were made for God. He is the end no less than the cause or author of creation. Men and angels were made for his glory. Not only was their happiness, and their communion to be sought and found in him, but any supreme aim of life than him, any conception of existence that did not recognize his will as the highest law and good, or any employment of those divinely given powers with which he was endowed that did not practically and obediently

acknowledge his claims as primary to all others, yea as the very end of rational being, was self-prostitution of the most real and thorough character, and could only precipitate the complete derangement of all the powers and faculties of his nature. Man as an organism was replete with God, or rather God was himself the fundamental law of his being. The very basis of the human nature was laid in the divine grace, and this conditioned and determined the entire organism. For man there can be no legitimate end out of and beyond God. And to determine life by any other principle than this is to sin no less against himself than against God. Verily, sin is a perversion of human nature, and as such a false relation of existence.

What is will? Considered as a faculty the will is in its very nature self-determining. In the exercise of this the subject chooses between various alternatives, determines himself to ends. Formal definitions have been very conflicting, but viewing these closely there is an approximate agreement touching the most vital function of this faculty, viz., that of self-determination. The various definitions given and cited by Dr. Baugher\* when narrowly examined, confirm this view. Almost without exception there is either expressed or implied this essential characteristic, that the will is the power to choose or to determine for one's self. That its essence is freedom is involved in the very idea of the term. Constraint in the direction either of virtue or of vice is a contradiction. Not that the will in its present state may of itself choose the good and refuse the evil, but that neither the one nor the other is contrary to the will as now affected by sin or grace. It was to the Israelites in their strong and stubborn tendency to apostasy that Joshua said, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." It must not be confounded with the intellect or the sensibilities, though these are the faculties which present conditions and occasions of will-action. It was in failing to make and preserve this distinction that Edwards and others were led to advocate the doctrine of necessity.

It is not maintained that the will is wholly independent. This could not be inasmuch as it is of God. Neither is it affirmed that the *forms* of its activity are entirely within its own power; or that it chooses without motives, or independent of and apart from the sensibilities and the intellect. But that over and above all, and notwith-

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\* See p. 699.

standing all, it possesses the divinely given power or prerogative to determine itself. In this also were we made in the image of God. He has will, infinite and absolute, unchangeable in nature and essence, and to whom sin can be neither actual nor possible. Man, who is a microtheism, as well as a microcosm, is in nothing more God-like than in the possession of this attribute. Answering alike to his being and to his destiny is the power to elect and freely for himself in harmony with his God-given nature. The most essential notion of this is, not that at any moment he can do as he pleases, as though this prerogative were given him to flaunt as a defiant power in the face of the Almighty. It is insisted upon that human freedom, as to its idea, does not consist in "power to the contrary" at any moment or in any action. On the contrary, its primary distinction is in choosing *for* God, *for* right, and *for* holiness. This is to determine ourselves according to the condition of our being as God made it in the beginning. Decision in the direction of the opposite is as truly violation of that nature as it is of divine law. I have the power to do my neighbor personal injury, to protect his life and character; or by malicious act or neglect contribute to the destruction of both. I can do either. But if I will his injury is that involved and necessarily in the idea of freedom? Is not this clearly its abuse or perversion? Is not the right alone consistent with the true conception of created liberty? Unquestionably so. Its truth is involved in this, that we were made for God, and in his, image. To that his end as our end, his service and glory as our delight, and his expressed will as our vocation, is not only the true exercise of liberty, but the only line of conduct that can consist with our destiny. He may and can turn away from the normal line of behavior on which he was placed at his creation, may come to an adverse decision, and elect as an aim of life what is opposed to the divine will—all which is involved as a *possibility* in the possession of freedom—but this is the abuse of what he has and is; and this is sin. "The essence of will, according to any adequate conception of it, is, that it cannot *be* perverted, it can only pervert itself."\*

Standing in the light of these views, views that are based, we believe, no less upon a true anthropology than upon theology, we have and hold the truth of the question at issue. Objections by way

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\* Müller.

of inference may be drawn and urged against it. But the ground, metaphysical and moral, is solid, established upon the divine word and being, as well as upon the nature of man. Upon this we will stand, let a carping criticism or an anti-Christian philosophy object as they may. Sin has been caused by the will of the rational creature "in turning away from God, which act, God not aiding,"

"Brought death into our world and all its woe."

With what beauty and pathos has the poet expressed this same truth :

"Thou art the source and centre of all minds,  
 Their only point of rest, eternal Word!  
 From thee departing, they are lost and rove  
 At random, without honor, hope, or peace.  
 From thee is all that soothes the life of man—  
 His high endeavor and his glad success,  
 His strength to suffer and his will to serve."

Have we not here too an answer to the earnest questionings of Dante?

"One doubt remains,  
 That wrings me sorely, if I solve it not.  
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 The world indeed, is even so forlorn  
 Of all good, as thou speakest it, and so swarms  
 With every evil, yet, beseech thee, point  
 The cause out to me, that myself may see  
 And unto others show it: for in heaven  
 One places it, and one on earth below.'

That was an age in which the Pelagianism of the Church of Rome had wrought out the deepest immorality among priests and people. The doctrine of necessity, even to the extreme of fatalism, was a natural reaction. The prevalent religion and philosophy contributed alike to unsettle the foundations of society. Hope in God and man was well nigh quenched.

Sin entered the universe of God before it entered our world. There was a fall among the angels, led by a chief angel, who, when man was created, seduced him from his holy estate. What that sin of the apostate angels was we are not definitely informed in Holy Scripture. But that it consisted just in this *turning away from God*, from the contemplation of him and his service, viewed as the high-

est good, to that of self; that pride, born of ambition, was its nature and cause, is the thought ruling in that fine epic of Milton, and based, we think, no less upon a just inference from the Scriptures. The outward revolt had its cause in, and was consequent upon, an inner turning away from God. The issue of that act was a state characterized by complete perversion, or rather inversion of nature, followed thence-forward by an existence in thorough, earnest, and all-embracing opposition and hatred of God. That this is true is confirmed by the "history of the devil" from the beginning. There was a time when sin had no existence, a time this side the first divine creative act. God not only lived the "highest in the highest, the holy in the holy; dwelling in that ineffable blessedness which from all eternity belonged to his infinite being and perfections, but holy angels also, his creatures, lived and served in adoring contemplation of his matchless character, and in loving, reverent obedience to his will. The physical universe with its head and lord was not yet called into existence. It had its being only in the divine mind, was the subject of the divine councils of the blessed Trinity, and played before the vision of that all-seeing Intelligence as an object worthy his infinite contemplation and activity ere 'the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy'" at its actual creation. That ideal world which God was occupied and delighted with beholding, and which was even then his world, was replete with the holy harmonies of his being. That it might be entered and ruined by sin was a possibility which was present to his mind from the beginning, but to create a world to which sin was actual and necessary did not come within the divine purpose. A world without sin, and free from all moral disorder, was alone worthy of his eternal beholding and admiration. When he executed that infinite purpose in giving to the world actual being "the man" was created, and constituted its crowning glory. The beautiful image of his maker, the living union of nature and spirit, created in holiness and truth, yet capable of and destined for an endless development, living in real communion with God, and yet in real union with the world whose head and lord he was made, he went forth to work out under God his high destiny. Constituted by nature and grace with every endowment requisite to his work, with the earth as the sphere of his activity, there lay out before him a mission which he was in every way qualified to fulfill. To grow in righteousness and truth, to



*behave* himself before God in holy obedience to his will in all things. and thus "to go on to perfection," was to him the only normal course of life. Satan entered that garden, tempted, seduced this holy pair. The fall followed; sin was conceived, and brought forth then, and ever after, its terrible brood of death. What was this sin but an inward turning away from God, desire after what was prohibited? and this cherished led to outward disobedience.

This first sin, original in a unique sense, may claim a close consideration. Accepting the literal sense of the Mosaic narrative, it is maintained that the fruit should have appeared pleasant to the eyes, an object to be desired, was not in itself sin. That the world—beauty as created of God and existing under whatever form—should excite a response in the human nature, was inherent in the divinely constituted order of things and morally indifferent. Did not this result follow necessarily from the nature-basis of the human creature? Made for the world, and the converse, it is affirmed that it could not be otherwise. Man, being relatively a mediator between God and the world, is participant in the nature of both, and is moved by the life from beneath, as well as by that from above. The free personal union of the two, they meet in him, finding here their constant, conscious, living communion. God is supreme, and to him all life and action, and all the manifold relations that enter into and constitute the existence of the conscious creature, must be held in subordination. Man possesses faculties which are adapted to find their chief exercise in cherishing and recognizing this union in subordination to that divine will, and thus in leading up and on to higher and perfected realities. That his senses, external and internal, should receive impressions from the world *ad extra* and *ad intra*, should respond to the beauty and harmony which God has with generous hand inwrought in all creation, and move with the interest of a genuine sympathy towards its kindred nature, inheres in the very union insisted upon. But to contemplate this beauty as something to be desired apart from God, to look upon it as a good in itself, as something to be possessed in violation of his will expressed or implied, was the danger, yea, was sin itself. That God had said, "thou shalt not eat of it" was enough. That divine interdict was itself the highest expression of law, the supreme reason for abstinence. That this command was purely arbitrary we need not conclude; nor claim that he should state the explicit reason for imposing the prohibition.

This would not be in keeping with himself as absolute sovereign, nor with the subject as rational creature. Created and placed in a state of probation, possessing will in liberty, he must elect for himself, and choose as his own what God had given and put before him. Occupying with respect to the good within and without a relation analogous to that of man in regeneration, he is called in free endeavor to appropriate as personal possession what was his own *as a gift*. Virtue, as character, cannot be given; it must be acquired by and through personal endeavor. This involves and demands position in which free, conscious choice can be made. Adam was created with a nature which was throughout in harmony with God, and loving the good, but with the power of deciding, under temptation, to the contrary. This latter was abuse of power and sin. But to contemplate, earnestly and in continuance to look upon that concerning which God had said, "thou shalt not eat of it," was certainly to cherish and fondly that which was prohibited. And thus cherishing the thought of that object, the desire to possess it resulted in the inner choice, the will-movement towards it, and this again in that act which was contrary to God's command.

This may be not so much an explanation as the statement of what we hold to be the facts in the instance of that first sin. The whole subject, when traced to its elements, is an acknowledged mystery. But it is still true that the will viewed in its nature possesses the fearful prerogative of choosing otherwise than as God had ordered, adverse to the end for which it was created, and which at the same time was out of harmony with itself. That contrary act was sin, and the guilt of this was that of the will so deciding. This sin was approached before that act of the will passed. Holding that desire before the mind, cherishing it, was the sure way to danger. Standing in the presence of that which God had strictly forbidden them to take should have rendered them watchful. Disobedience was not in seeing the fruit of that tree, but in eating it. The attitude was perilous, the place itself was one of danger to these untried creatures. Then the tempter appears upon the scene, and by his lies seduced them. They ate of the fruit and fell. But this result was not a necessary one. They could have overcome in this trial, might have withdrawn from that scene morally pure and stronger than before, and thereby driven Satan from Paradise as he had been driven from heaven, and established themselves in their holy possessions.

All this inhered in that will-power which God gave them. An analogy to this is furnished in the life of the second Adam. Suffering in the wilderness and in the garden was not in itself pleasant to him. Even the accomplishment of his mission by the infinite sacrifice it demanded was not preferred for the suffering's sake. It was his desire and prayer to the Father that it might be otherwise. Have we not that prayer thrice repeated?—"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" But to escape this suffering never reached an act of the will. Even the desire to accomplish his work without that unutterably bitter experience was wholly conditioned upon the will of his Father. That a desire may, if cherished, lead to sin, and yet not be itself sinful, is traced to the passive relation of the sensibilities to the world around us. It has its ground in that peculiarity of the human creature by which he is allied to nature. An angel cannot feel as does man, because he has no side nature-ward. The essence of the temptation consisted in that the world presented real attractions, that it excited emotions and desires, which, indulged in themselves, might and would lead away from God. Holding on to these was the way to death, and did issue in willing violation of the divine law. Not until the will became wicked in man or devils was sin fully born. *The thought of evil* was not sin, any more than is the thought of virtue, virtue. It is only *the evil thought* brought to the birth in actual, personal experience, that is sin. Adam, apart from trial, would have never attained that perfection to which he was destined. Even the sinless Captain of our salvation was "made perfect through suffering," and all those who follow him into glory go up "through much tribulation." Desire as an affection of the soul in the unfallen creature is either good, or, viewed as excited by a tempting object, adapted to bring to a moral decision. The prohibited tree presented itself 'as good for food, and as pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise.' Without the tempter the fall could not have occurred, neither without an object that appealed to the sensible nature. Both were suited to lead to that personal decision, the conscious act of the will, which God could not, because he would not prevent. The tree was placed "in the midst of the garden." God could have warned them against approaching it, and the woman in a spirit of obedience to that injunction might have avoided the possibility of seeing its alluring fruit. But that would have defeated one purpose at least in placing it there, that of

trial. The Almighty does not design that they shall be kept out of danger. He would keep them in temptation as he keeps his people now while they are in the way of duty, pledging the presence of that sufficient grace in which they may conquer. The danger was not in the tree so much as in the created liberty, united with that natural susceptibility to impressions from without and within. In the exercise of this liberty, the highest, noblest, and most god-like endowment he possessed, man might turn away from God, might pervert that which was given for good ends to his own destruction, and thereby meet what was intended for probation into an occasion for the fall. What was possible became actual, and the history of man has been from the beginning a history of misdevelopment. Evil is not a creation, although it has become living in creation. It is only conceivable as a perverted selfish quality of the will of the personal creature, to be accounted for by the formal freedom of this creature. Evil as such has no existence (*nullam habet substantiam*), but we give the name of evil to the quality of that creature-will which, in opposition to God's will, and to man's own nature, refuses to stand in a *receptive* relation to God, and will be its own independent lord, its own God."\* But, it is again affirmed, this was in no sense a necessity. Because sin is a voluntary act, an act of the will, contrary to the divine will in form and fact, as written in the word of God, as well as in the conscience of man, it is that which *ought not to be*, and therefore involves guilt.

The application of the principle, upon which we have been insisting, to all forms and degrees of sin is evident upon reflection. Sin in its nature is the same, no matter what may be the state or circumstances of the subject. The will in its relation to sin has suffered a most material change since the fall, but the cause of sin, now as then, is the "will of the wicked." That it is less heinous in the sight of God when committed by a fallen creature we dare not conclude; or that he regards with less disfavor that depraved condition of will which has followed upon the first turning away from him. That first act of transgression, resulting in the perverse use of freedom, induced a state of will in Adam, which has been traduced to all born of him. The union between the human and the divine will has been destroyed, and discord and enmity have followed upon the com-

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\* Ebrard in Olshausen's Commentary on Hebrews.



munion and harmony that once reigned. Instead of that "true fear of God, and true love to God" which characterized the first man, heart, and understanding, and will, all attuned in loving sympathy with his being and perfections, he has become throughout depraved. Self is now the centre of human activity. Sin has dethroned God from his supreme place in the heart, and with this the understanding has become darkened respecting a true knowledge of his being, the will has been perverted, turned from him, no less than from its normal self, and a misdirected life, alienated in all its energies and functions characterizes him from birth to death. And just as before the fall the will in its state of holiness conditioned and determined his activities, so now the same will in its depraved state must condition all life and conduct. In both this state of will lies back of all the acts and exercises of the conscious and unconscious life of the moral creature. Deeper than the desires of the heart, underneath the motives that determine the will, and lying back of the loving and the hating, the hoping and the fearing, that so largely make up human life, is *this state*, the all-conditioning factor of the moral character of man. This very basis of human nature has become totally depraved, total in each and total in all. The power of choice between good and evil distinguished man in his uprightness. Not that he occupied the point of indifference between the two, but that, holy in nature, he was called to the conscious decision of his own destiny, and in the abuse of created liberty might determine for himself an end contrary to God and holiness. He chose the latter, and in this act precipitated himself and his posterity into a condition of moral alienation from his Creator. There is therefore no longer the power of choice between the good and the evil. The will is in a state of abject slavery as regards the choice of good, apart from redeeming grace in hopeless bondage, and left to itself cannot but sin. This condition has become the heritage of the race.

Heathen writers have left some striking testimonies in confirmation of the truth of this fact. Pythagoras describes it in this language: "The fatal companion, the noxious strife that lurks within us, and which was born along with us;" Aristotle: "The natural repugnance of man's temper to reason." Cicero lamented, "That men are brought into life by nature as a stepmother, with a naked, frail and infirm body, and with a soul prone to divers lusts;" Seneca, "That the seeds of all the vices are in all men, though they do not



break out in every one." Hierocles called this universal moral taint, "The domestic evil of mankind." Horace declared that "Mankind rush into wickedness, and always desire what is forbidden; that youth has the softness of wax to receive vicious impressions, and the hardness of rock to resist virtuous admonitions." And Juvenal has furnished a striking corroboration to the statement of Paul of Tarsus concerning the *carnal mind* (Rom. vii. 18-23), when he says that "Nature, unchangeably fixed, runs back to wickedness, as bodies to their centre."

It is true as the Confession of the Lutheran Church states that "The human reason or the natural intellect of man has some dim spark of the knowledge that God is, and holds some little part of the law." This, however, does not constitute an active capacity for good. Rather because he possesses this in his depraved condition is he capable of redemption, and may be reached by the grace of the gospel of the Son of God. Between man in his corrupt state and that grace that bringeth salvation the very point of union is this susceptibility. Without it we do not understand how his redemption would be possible. To this the appeals of the law and the gospel are made, and they find a response in every human heart. But that fact does not impair the truth of the declarations of scripture, or the testimony of conscience, concerning our total corruption by nature. Neither does it invalidate the statement of the Article under consideration, that the "cause of sin is the will of the wicked," sin no less in those to whom depravity has become an inheritance than in him to whom it was original. Once the product of an act, or rather of act and state consisting together, sin has become, in its primary conception, a state of the will, all whose activities, external and internal, are opposed to the divine will. And it is just as true, that, while the necessity of sinning is upon man in this depraved condition, it is not forced upon him by any external power. The will still chooses as its own this apostate condition, stands by nature in an attitude of decision as regards sin, loving and doing it even before consciousness has advanced to maturity. This state is itself one of sin. That is the most thorough-going superficiality which denies that to be sin which lies back of consciousness. As well maintain that the child has neither conscience nor reason before these powers are consciously exercised. Nor is it less superficial to hold, that, since we are born in a state of sin that necessarily condi-

tions all the subsequent natural life, this state of nature cannot involve responsibility and guilt. Sin has become a fatality, but it is none the less guilt before God and conscience. In the mystery of the will we discover the cause of sin in an innocent and holy being. In the mystery of the same will, depraved though it be, and inherited as a state of perverseness from our parents, we find guilt. Destiny, now as then, is a matter of choice. As life advances towards its maturity the sense of sin and guilt anticipates the first opening of consciousness. It is there, because it is born with each incoming life. With inexorable fidelity it stands over every one. He can no more evade it than can he escape from himself. It holds him under its relentless eye because it is his possession by nature. It was the recognition of this fact that prompted that language of the apostle—how like an exclamation of despair it sounds!—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" In this the will is involved in bondage to the remorseless tyrant. In such voluntary and complete subjection to sin, how can it choose the love and service of a God of infinite holiness and truth?

In this connection the statement of this fact is demanded, that, in the centre of humanity, the bondage of sin has been broken. The Gospel is the good news of deliverance from its power. Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son, assumed enslaved human nature, vanquished the power of sin, and secured for all men new life in peace with God. He was the vicar of God, as of man, and his work brought in a sure and perfect salvation for all. This fact itself, the Gospel offered in its saving power to all who believe. Wherever this is preached, or in any way proclaimed, life and deliverance are promised. Nor is it a bare word of declaration concerning what has been done by Christ. The power to accept is in the offered salvation. Acceptance is salvation. That such has been secured in itself helps no one. This fact, as a mere fact, might be posted all over heathendom, and yet no one be lifted from his bondage. There must be proclamation made in order that man may "stand upon his feet," then hear and believe. That word made known breaks up the absoluteness of the state of nature, and in good faith offers to him the power to accept it by a trustful act of the heart. If he refuses, then verily, his blood is upon his own head. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world." The act of rejection is ours, that of believing acceptance is the gift of God.

The conclusion reached by this line of thought, which is indeed little more than an elaboration of what the Scriptures plainly treat and imply, is clearly confirmed in the testimony of conscience. The sense of guilt which possesses every one is an unanswerable argument against the theories that would find the cause of sin in any other source than that given in our Article. Trace it to any other origin, and you have absolutely no explanation of the fact mentioned. There is a form of determinism, nearly allied to the theory of necessity, which affirms that, while man is not forced by any external power to any act or line of conduct, he is yet so absolutely under the control of motives that freedom is entirely a delusion. But whether this be maintained under the form of a dogmatic, a philosophical or fatalistic determinism, conscience testifies alike against every phase of the theory. Its imperatives stand over against all necessitarianism, and it will admit the truth of no explanation that contradicts its own experience. My sin is guilt, and is that which ought not to be. This testimony of conscience has been much emphasized in explanation of other facts, and has been often called upon to give evidence concerning that which it could not know. But there is no question upon which it can more rightly testify, or concerning which it has better knowledge of the facts in the case, than the one under dispute. Conscience always and everywhere agrees in its witness as to the fact of personal sin and guilt. Even among the heathen who are ignorant of the revelation of God in word, and who know nothing of the salvation in Christ, this sense of guilt is found. Though clouded, yea grossly darkened by sin, yet "feeling after God, if haply they may find him," they are ready to acknowledge this as a fact of conscience. This would not be explicable, indeed could not be, if sin were a necessity, or had its origin elsewhere than in the will. This alone explains the mystery of sin, with its attendant condemnation. To some degree there is in all that special work of the law, "the knowledge of sin." Death owes its sting to this, and it is that which creates the fear and bondage of death, the common heritage of all who know not him who through death has abolished its power. We repeat, against all theories that would refer sin to any other cause than that here stated stands the inviolate and inviolable testimony of conscience. How strikingly is its power described by Juvenal :

Cur tamen hos tu  
 Evasisse putes, quos diri conscia facti  
 Mens habet attonitos et surdo verbere caedit.  
 Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum?  
 Poena autem vehemens ac multo saevior illis,  
 Quas et Caedicius gravis invenit et Rhadamanthus,  
*Nocte dieque suum gestare in pectore testem.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Has patitur poenas *peccandi sola voluntas*.  
 Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,  
*Facti crimen habet* : Cedo, si conata peregit? \*

This disquisition may not close without some inquiry concerning *the theodicy*. The question is, how can we reconcile the existence of sin with the character of God? If this problem has received no special consideration in the discussion already had, it is certainly not because it has not pressed itself upon our attention. To leave it unnoticed would be to pass over one of the most prominent, perhaps the most prominent fact obtruding itself upon the history of earnest critical thought. It has claimed and received the recognition of philosophers and theologians in every age. Around it have been constructed varying systems, between which the sharpest conflicts have been waged. Not infrequently conclusions have been reached dishonoring alike to God and man. Some of the profoundest and acutest thinkers of our race have acknowledged their inability to find, after patient and long-continued investigations, a satisfactory solution of the embarrassing question, and have retired into avowed skepticism, or abandoning belief in the power and goodness of God, have regarded him as maintaining an attitude of indifference towards the world he has created. Socrates and Plato confessed themselves unable to answer the question. Descartes, Spinoza, and Hobbes, although representing various systems of philosophy, based upon anti-scriptural premises and reasonings their conclusions, and bound the human will in an iron necessity that destroyed all moral responsibility. Is not the same true of Malebranche, Lessing, Goethe, and many others, who, misconceiving the greatness of God, could find no room for the exercise of created liberty within the divine government? And the whole scheme of necessity advocated by Edwards, and before him by many of the Reformers, while defending human freedom and accountability, is at the same time cer-

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\* Quoted from Harless' Christian Ethics.

tainly chargeable with inconsistency, if not, indeed, involving God, at least by indirection, in the existence of sin. To reconcile such a theory of necessity with moral accountability is even more difficult, since it involves a contradiction, than to harmonize the existence of sin in God's universe with his character. That sin has its cause in the will of the wicked accounts both for the testimony of conscience and the divine word concerning the fact of human guilt, and before this clearly established truth must go down all theories that would tend, even by implication, to impair either. But that sin exists as a fact in the divine government of the universe, and that God neither caused nor approves it is another, though a related question, which will not retire before the presence of any of the schemes referred to. In the construction of the theodicy validity must be allowed alike to the holy sovereignty of God and the fact of sin as opposed to and hated of God. Manichæism already noticed in its view as to the origin of evil, is wholly unable to form a theodicy, or even to attempt a vindication of the divine character. Sin has existed from eternity, and of necessity has place in the world. In fact this came into being through the agency of Satan no less than of God, and belongs to and inheres in the original constitution of the world. Active in its creation it remains active in its subsequent history. Bayle, one of its ablest defenders in modern times, accepts the theory of dualism as the most plausible method of accounting for the existence and prevalence of evil. Any one possessing even a slight acquaintance with his *Philosophical Dictionary*, that masterpiece of learning, cannot fail to feel interested in his skillful defence and delineation of the theory. But at the same time, how like a play at dialectics seems the whole argument! He characterizes it as a "false tenet, more ancient than Manes, and that it cannot be maintained by any one, who admits the Holy Scriptures, either in whole or in part." But that he did not believe it is evident from his own language. He has "exhausted the resources of his genius, as well as the rich stores of his learning, in order to adorn the doctrine of this arch-heretic, and to render it more plausible, if possible, than any other which has been employed to explain the origin and existence of evil. But this was not because he sincerely believed it to be founded in truth. He merely wished to show its superiority to other schemes, in order that by demolishing it he might the more effectually inspire the minds of men with a dark feeling of universal



skepticism. It was decorated by him, not as a system of truth, but as a sacrifice to be offered up on the altar of atheism. True to the instincts of his philosophy, he sought on this subject, as well as on all others, to extinguish the light of science, and manifest the wonders of his power, by hanging round the wretched habitation of man the gloom of eternal despair." \* No, on this basis God is neither just, good, nor all-powerful. He is engaged in a conflict which has neither beginning nor end, and to espouse this theory in explanation of the mysterious problems of human life is to enter a vortex that can only precipitate into a state of complete despair, or skepticism. It is recorded as one of the triumphs of Christianity that this dark and gloomy scheme no longer casts its baleful shadows upon humanity.

Among the various methods employed to reconcile the existence of sin with the character of God, none has been perhaps more generally accepted among the educated than that of Optimism. Its fundamental principle, as stated by Dugald Stewart, is this, "That all events are ordered for the best; and that evils which we suffer are parts of a great system conducted by almighty power under the direction of infinite wisdom and goodness." This speculation, which with certain important modifications, contains no little truth, is almost coincident with critical thought. There is a remarkable passage in Lactantius, containing an objection of Epicurus, with the reply of this author. It so aptly states the argument of the objector, as well as the reply of the Optimist, that we make no apology for introducing it here. It runs as follows: "God, says Epicurus, is either willing to remove evil, and is not able: or he is able and not willing: or he is neither willing, nor able: or he is both willing and able. If he is willing and not able, he must then be weak, which cannot be affirmed of God. If he is able and not willing, he must be envious, which is likewise contrary to the nature of God. If he is neither willing nor able, he must be both envious and weak, and consequently not God. If he is both willing and able, which only can agree with the notion of God, whence then proceeds evil? Or why does he not remove it?" "I know," and here follows the reply of Lactantius, "that the greatest part of philosophers, who assert a providence, are commonly embarrassed with this argument, and almost forced against their will to acknowledge that God does not

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\* Bledsoe's Theodicy,

concern himself with the administration of the world, which is the very thing that Epicurus drives at. But we easily overthrow this formidable argument by clear reason. For God can do whatsoever he pleases, and there is no weakness or wrong in him, consequently he is able to remove evil but is not willing, and yet for all that is not envious. He does not remove evil for this reason, because withal (as I have shown) he bestows wisdom, and there is more good and satisfaction in wisdom, than there is in painfulness in evil. By wisdom likewise we come to know God, and by that knowledge attain to immortality, which is the chief good. And therefore unless we first know evil we shall not be able to know good. But neither Epicurus nor any other observed this: if evil be removed, wisdom must also be removed; no trace of virtue will remain; because virtue consists in bearing with an overcoming the sharpness of evil. And so, for the small advantage of the removal of evil, we should be deprived of the greatest, the most real, and proper good. It is evident, therefore, that all things, evil as well as good, were intended for the benefit of mankind." \* It is true that the objection, as well as the reply to it, concerns physical evil, but the argument of Epicurus would be rather strengthened when applied to the existence of sin. As to the reply of Lactantius, what a complete justification it would have furnished to Eve in the garden, had she only possessed a knowledge of dialectics? What a rejoinder would the Almighty have made to such an argument!

But "in fact, it would almost seem as if here were a case where, turn to which side we please, there meets us the horn of a dilemma. If the world is not the best possible, says the optimist, God cannot be all-good. But if the world be the best possible, the best that God can make, 'is the inference not just as good that God cannot be all-powerful? Or, rather, is the true inference not this, that we are reasoning in a region too high for us, and where our conclusions are not much worth one way or another? Then, is it clear that there can be no real evil in the world, because God is absolutely good? May it not merely be better that there should be even such evil than that God should prevent it by making men unable to do it, while yet the world would be a great deal better than it is if men did no evil. There is a vast difference between the so-called evils of the physical world and the evils of the moral world. The former can

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\* See Paulicians, Bayle's Phil. Dictionary.

be shown to be conducive to the good of the physical system as a whole, and therefore to be only seemingly evil. The latter are pronounced by conscience to be essentially evil, and investigation fails to prove that they have any rightful place in the world."\* Unquestionably the ablest modern defender of the theory is Leibnitz, the result of whose speculations, under various modifications, lie at the basis of most of the reasoning upon this subject. The oriental Manichæism made freedom itself the evil principle, while western thought finds its necessity in the relation of liberty to nature, and regards it as the necessary transition from a state of nature to that of culture. This was the view of Hegel and Schleiermacher, who brought to its defence their almost unequalled analytic research, while to Schiller belongs the work of clothing the theory in the attractive garb of poetry. According to this no progress in the history of the world is possible or conceivable without antagonism, and what presents itself to finite knowledge as evil, would, were the whole world-plan within our comprehension, be justified by the highest wisdom and goodness. All that exists and occurs belongs to that "pre-established harmony," which consists with the entire universe of God. Evil has its just place in the divine order, and constitutes an integral part of the world-plan. But against this theory in all its forms stand the testimony of conscience, the facts of human experience and observation, and above all the revealed word of God. To affirm that this "present evil world" is the best world is to make sin necessary that salvation may abound, yea, is to charge God himself with "doing evil that good may come." Verily, a theodicy built on such a foundation cannot stand in the light of revelation, or purified reason. Rather no attempt at an explanation than this.

But just what is the nature and the limit of our knowledge in this domain? That God is good both his word and works attest. That sin exists is no less a truth of revelation than of experience and observation. Along with the evidences of the divine goodness are those of the existence and prevalence of sin, and these latter often so predominating as to excite doubt concerning the providence of a good God. The pessimist has no little to justify his views, for apart from the salvation in Christ, and confining the judgment to the present order and state, it may well be doubted whether more of good than evil exists. The optimist avers, that could we occupy a suffi-

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\* See under Optimism in Schaff-Herzog.

ciently comprehensive standpoint, and overlook the whole course of human life and history, the evil that exists, together with the death that reigns and revels amid so much pain and disorder on this lower plane, would be found to contribute to the highest happiness and well-being of the whole, that what appears here as a tragedy would then bear the aspect of a *divina comedia*. What we have is only the apparent discord that belongs rather to the uncultivated ear, while in that higher realm all the antiphonies of the universe blend in sweet and perfect harmony. The pessimist, on the contrary, affirms that all apparent good is only evil in disguise, and that the seeming happiness of individuals, classes, and nations is purchased, and always, at the sacrifice of others, that the particular good is not good from the view-point of the whole, and that could the vision be had from this high vantage ground men would themselves appear the "puppets of providence," the world a scene of confusion, and universal nature nothing more than the domain of conflict, pain and death. Looking upon this scene Schopenhauer was led to exclaim: "What! this world created of God! Rather is it the work of the Devil! Of Pessimism it has been truly said, "that it can only flourish in pantheistic soil. The belief that existence is essentially evil can never spring from a true theism." And again: "If there be a personal God, a moral law, and a heavenly life, pessimism must manifestly be rejected. If there be no proof of these things it cannot be conclusively refuted."

But the question still returns upon us, why did not God prevent the introduction of evil? Or, inasmuch as he hates it, why has he permitted it? Maintaining the infinite power of God, as also his infinite aversion to sin, is it not a mystery passing all human comprehension that he at any moment should allow its existence in his world? It has certainly not occurred without his knowledge, any more than beyond the reach of his power. While sin was not a factor in the divine world-plan, its possibility was present to the mind of God from eternity. And since it was within the divine foreknowledge its existence was recognized in the secret counsels of God. But sin as an actuality neither exists by right of necessity, nor from the divine decree, nor that the love of God might be manifested in its forgiveness and removal. In the second person of the Godhead there was existent a way of redemption from its consequences and power, but the Son does not owe his place in the

essential Trinity either to the possibility or actuality of sin in the universe. The divine decrees must be viewed both as conditioned and unconditioned; viewed, we repeat, not as accommodating a mysterious subject to our weak comprehension, but as corresponding to what actually exists in the mind of God. Here place is left for the determination of the free creature, and whatever be the nature of his decision regarding the gift of created liberty it does not occur without the divine mind, or place the subject beyond the reach of the all-embracing divine counsels. The love of God in redemption does indicate a new refraction, but that love would have shone forth with infinite splendor had sin never found place in the world. Then since a way of restoration from sin existed with God from eternity he could in infinite wisdom create a being whose fall was not only possible, but which would be followed with sorrow and death bequeathed to the face of man. To the question, whence and why moral evil? This answer may be given, "What God absolutely wills not, but on the contrary, hates and punishes, he could not wholly have prevented, without annihilating that human freedom, willed and conferred by himself."\* Does this set a limit to the divine power? We reply, yes, and no! Yes, since he would not by a mere act of external power repress that freedom conferred by himself; no, inasmuch as he himself places a limit to his power in giving existence to a creature possessed of liberty. He could not because he would not prevent evil by doing violence to his own work. God may not put forth the hand of his power to hinder the free act of man, but he can and will lay hold on the infinite resources within his own being to repair the evil introduced, and cause his grace and wisdom to abound in the midst of the reign of sin and death. Christianity contains the sublimest exhibition of the divine power, wisdom and love, and to those who accept it there belongs a higher and more distinguished blessedness than could have been attained by the unfallen creature. Neither optimism nor pessimism is, as a whole, either true or false. Christianity contains the truth of both, and only on this as a foundation can be reared a theodicy alike honoring to God, and at the same time affording a restful security to Christian inquiry. It does not at once remove evil from the world, nor even the power of sin from the human heart. Its condemnation is taken away, its power broken here in the flesh,

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\* Van Oosterzee, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 341.



while it promises in the life to come complete release. To the Christian all that exists may contribute to his advancement in virtue and his higher blessedness in heaven. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Be it sorrow or pain in any form or to any degree, joy or grief, experience of sin in the conflict of life, or increasing hope of glory, be it tribulation or death—all, under divine grace, contributes to his future glory. And since Christianity is a universal religion, and is intended of God for all men, it alone affords a sure hope to humanity, and supplies an answer to the main inquiry. In the light of this we can magnify the wisdom and love of God in our estate of sin and sorrow, and "joy in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope."

But there is still much that remains dark and mysterious, even though the light abounds about our pathway. There are questions upon which Christianity throws no light, or that light is so dim that we cannot venture to walk with confidence in it. When the cross of the Son of God is seen then all is clear, but before how many has that cross never been lifted up? and in the midst of the gross darkness that still hangs over the world sin and death appear as problems whose solution we are unable to discover. But standing in the knowledge we possess, and in which we rejoice despite the surrounding darkness, the assurance that God reigns in righteousness and holy love affords a sure support. What we cannot understand we leave to his infinite wisdom, and even in what now troubles and confuses our weak and darkened comprehension, we rest in the sure and sweet hope that "he doeth all things well," and that in the future life his government will stand fully justified in the sight of men and angels.

"Finally, the history of the world and of the kingdom of God gives us to see an approximation, slow indeed, and frequently interrupted, but yet constant, towards this glorious end. The world's history is the world's judgment, but that judgment at the same time a continual world-restoration, which ceases not until the closing word of creation's history (Gen. i. 31) shall have become also that of the annals of the divine government. Nothing is more hopeless than to oppose this work of God, nothing more blessed than willingly to advance it. When finally it shall be manifestly completed—

and in principle it is so already for the eye of faith—the *nil mirari* will be no longer possible, and wonder more than ever be recognized not simply as της φιλοσοφίας, but also as της προσκυνήσεως αρχή—the beginning not only of philosophy, but also of adoration. In the words of the great Dutch poet, Da Costa :

“At the confines of the ages, sees my eye the spirit of evil  
Vanquished and disarmed, for rebellion no more able,  
When the Lord God in all things and in all is all,  
Will it light be, ever light be, light of light and darkness born.”\*

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\* Van Oosterzee's Christian Dogmatics, p. 352.

## ARTICLE XX.

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# THE RELATION OF FAITH AND GOOD WORKS.

BY E. HUBER, D. D.

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We are falsely accused of having prohibited good works; but our writings on the Ten Commandments and other subjects show that we have given good and useful instructions and admonitions in respect to various Christian relations, duties and works; respecting which, prior to this time, little had been taught, but almost every sermon urged continually the necessity of puerile and needless works—as rosaries, worship of saints, monastic vows, pilgrimages, stated fasts, holidays, fraternities, etc. Works so needless even our opponents do not extol so highly now as formerly; besides, they have also learned to treat of faith now, concerning which in former times they preached nothing at all; they teach now, however, that we are not justified before God by works alone, but add faith in Christ, saying faith and works justify us before God—a doctrine which may afford more consolation than one teaching confidence in works alone.

Now the doctrine concerning faith, which is the principal Article in the Christian Creed, not having been inculcated for so long a time, as all must confess, but the doctrine concerning works alone having been preached everywhere, the following instructions on this subject are offered by our divines:

First, that our works cannot reconcile us to God and merit grace, but these things are effected through faith alone, if we believe that our sins are forgiven us for Christ's sake, who alone is the Mediator, reconciling the Father. He, therefore, that expects to effect this reconciliation by works, and to merit grace, contemns Christ and seeks a way of his own to God, contrary to the Gospel.

This doctrine of faith is clearly and explicitly inculcated by Paul in many places, especially in Ephes. ii. 8, 9. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast," etc. And that a new signification is not introduced here, may be shown from Augustine, who has treated this subject carefully, and who in like manner teaches, that we obtain grace and are justified before God, through

faith in Christ, and not by works, as his whole book, "*De Spiritu et Litera*," clearly shows. Although this doctrine is despised very much by the thoughtless, yet it will be found that it is very consoling and salutary to timid and alarmed consciences; for our consciences cannot secure tranquillity and peace by works, but through faith alone, when they feel in themselves an assurance, that for Christ's sake they have a merciful God, as Paul says, Rom. v. 1: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Heretofore this consolation was not administered in sermons, but the wretched consciences of men were driven upon works of their own, and various works were taken in hand; for conscience drove some into monasteries, with the hope of acquiring grace there by a monastic life; others devised works of another kind, for the purpose of meriting grace and of making satisfaction for sins. Many of these have experienced, that peace could not be secured by these things. It was, for this reason, necessary to preach and enforce with diligence this doctrine of faith in Christ, that it might be known that through faith alone, without merit, the grace of God is secured.

It is also inculcated, that the faith here spoken of is not the faith which devils and the ungodly possess, who believe the historical fact that Christ has suffered and risen from the dead; but it is the *true* faith—the faith which believes that we obtain grace and the forgiveness of sins through Christ. And hence, whoever knows that he has a merciful God through Christ, knows God, calls upon him, and is not without God, like the Gentiles. For the devil and the ungodly do not believe the article concerning the remission of sins; for this reason they are enemies to God, unable to call upon him, or to hope for anything good from him; and, as just now shown, the Scripture, speaking of faith, does not style faith such a knowledge as devils and wicked men possess; for it is taught concerning faith, in Heb. xi. 1, that to have merely a knowledge of the facts of history is not faith, but to have confidence in God that we shall receive his promises. And Augustine also reminds us that we should understand the word *faith* in Scripture, to mean a confidence in God that he is merciful to us, and not a mere knowledge of the fact—a knowledge which devils also possess.

It is taught further that good works should and must be performed, not with a view of placing confidence in them as meriting grace, but in accordance with his will, and for the glory of God. Faith alone constantly secures grace and forgiveness of sins. And because the Holy Spirit is given through faith, the heart becomes qualified to perform good works. For before this, while it is without the Holy Spirit, it is too weak; besides, it is in the power of Satan, who urges frail human nature to many sins; as we see among the philosophers, who resolving to live honorably and unblamably, were unable to effect it, and fell into many great and open sins. So it happens with all men who attempt, without true faith and without the Holy Spirit, to govern themselves by their own strength alone. Wherefore, the doctrine concerning faith does not deserve censure as discouraging good works, but should much rather be applauded as teaching the performance of good works, and as offering assistance by which good works may be performed. For without faith, and out of Christ, the nature and ability of man are much too weak to do good works, to call upon God, to have patience in sufferings, to love his neighbor, faithfully to execute com-

missions, to be obedient, to avoid evil lusts. Such exalted and righteous works cannot be performed without the assistance of Christ, as he himself says, John xv. 5, "Without me, ye can do nothing."

THE Article which it falls to our lot to consider at this time is an answer to the charge of prohibiting good works—a charge of sufficiently serious character to warrant the full and earnest reply made to it by our Confessors at Augsburg. For, if substantiated, it overthrows our doctrine concerning justification by faith, and thus deprives us of our chief reason for existing as a distinct church, destroys the main foundation upon which our superstructure is reared, cuts the central root that gives subsistence and richness to our life, and leaves us as witnesses of God in the unenviable position of persons occupying the various thoroughfares of life cruelly and wickedly engaged in showing men, who ask the way to heaven, into the broad road that leads to death and hell.

This charge is one that was very common in the time of the Reformation, but is not confined to that period, as it continues to be repeated even to this day, and that not by Catholics only, but frequently also by Protestants themselves. On this account we propose to consider this Article independently of the circumstances under which it originated, and irrespective of time, place or creed, accord the privilege of a hearing to all who, expressly or by implication, have anything to say in substantiation of the immoral effects of our teaching on the subject of faith.

In the first place, let us seek to attain to a definite understanding of the nature of the offence with which we stand charged. "Our writers," says the Article itself, "are falsely accused of prohibiting good works." Now by good works here are not meant the unprofitable things generally understood by the term in its technical Romish sense, but everything whatever that God has commanded us to become and to do in his word; not the works justly characterized by our Article as childish and needless, such "as keeping of holidays, set fasts, fraternities, pilgrimages, worshiping of saints, the use of rosaries, monkery, and such like things," but the moral virtues, the fruits of the Holy Spirit, and the righteous conduct and Christian life thence proceeding.

Now these works, thus understood, they accuse us of forbidding. By this, however, they do not mean to charge us with disapproving and condemning the good works themselves, and therefore discour-



tenancing and opposing them for their own sake, but, that we hold and teach such views concerning justification as virtually and practically amounts to the prohibition of the very graces and duties enjoined by God himself.

The attack, accordingly, is aimed at the very citadel of our Protestant faith—the Article gloried in as the one with which the Church stands or falls; and the charge of prohibiting good works is merely the weapon with which our stronghold is to be demolished—the evidence that justification as taught by us is an invention of man and not a truth of the word that endureth forever.

That the point of assault is where we have represented, is evident from the whole contents of our Article, which is, from beginning to end, a setting forth and defence of the doctrine of faith: as also from the Romish Confutation in which this Article of our Confession is entirely rejected on the ground that it teaches “that good works do not merit the remission of sins.”

Understanding now what the indictment is which is preferred against us, let us ascertain what proof they propose to furnish to sustain the same. The arguments mainly relied on to convict us of guilt may be reduced to the three following: 1. The manners and lives of those who hold that we are justified by faith, are corrupt and ungodly; therefore the doctrine itself must be false and immoral. 2. In various passages in which faith is spoken of, the leading Reformers have plainly and expressly declared that good works are of no consequence if only men do not cease to believe. 3. The logical and inevitable tendency of the doctrine that faith alone justifies, is to produce indifference to righteousness and holiness; for if by faith, without the deeds of the law, we are forgiven, accepted of God, and made heirs of eternal life, then we have need of nothing further. Or, as Luther himself has put this last objection, “If faith does everything and by itself suffices for our justification, why then are good works commanded?”

That the three specified propositions contain the substance of the arguments ordinarily employed in support of the charge that the Protestant view of justification discourages morality, may be seen from the following specific statements and facts gathered from various sources.

Cardinal Bellarmine, one of the most eminent of Roman Catholic theologians and controversialists, who lived in the latter half of the

16th century and a part of the 17th, is quoted by Bishop Davenant of the English Church, as follows: "We prove that Luther used to deny the necessity of good works, from the lives and manners of his followers: who, in consequence of this teaching, abandoned themselves to all wickedness with such incredible licentiousness that it became quite needful for Luther to praise good works and to exhort to the practice of them." Here the excessive wickedness said to be prevalent among the followers of the great Reformer, is boldly ascribed to the peculiar doctrine taught by him in opposition to that of the Church of Rome.

Archbishop Spalding, of this country, in his History of the Protestant Reformation, devotes a long chapter to the influence of the Reformation on morals. In this he professes to give an analysis of the testimony of the leading Reformers themselves as to the practical moral results of their own teaching. This testimony is gathered by the *Dublin Review* from a work by Dr. Döllinger, and inserted by Spalding in the chapter referred to. Luther is the first and most important witness. He testifies as follows: "Everything is reversed, the world grows worse every day for this teaching; and the misery of it is that men are nowadays more covetous, more hard-hearted, more corrupt, more licentious, and more wicked, than of old under the papacy. \* \* \* Our evangelicals are now sevenfold more wicked than they were before. In proportion as we hear the gospel, we steal, lie, cheat, gorge, swell, and commit every crime." The writer of the article in the *Review* further adds that "it could hardly be expected that Luther would himself attribute this universal depravity, the presence of which he thus frankly acknowledges, to the influence of his own gospel. But he cannot and does not conceal that such was the popular impression concerning it. \* \* \* Indeed, not to multiply evidence of a fact so notorious, he himself acknowledges that the peasants, through the influence of the gospel; have become utterly beyond restraint, and think they may do as they please. They no longer fear hell or purgatory, but content themselves by saying, 'I believe, therefore I shall be saved;' and they become proud, stiff-necked mammonists and accursed misers, sucking the very substance of the country and the people."

Not having access to the work of Döllinger's from which the extract is collected, we are not in a position to verify it by comparison with Luther's writings; but, damaging as the testimony may be, we

presume its genuineness must be admitted from the character of the several writers, from the evidence furnished by the style, which is evidently that of Luther, as also from the fact that the state of things described is confirmed by statements derived from Protestant sources, as, for example, that of K $\ddot{o}$ stlin, which will be given a little further on.

Melanchthon is next called up, and he bears witness as follows: "In these latter times the world has taken to itself a boundless license; very many are so unbridled as to throw off every bond of discipline, though at the same time they pretend that they have faith, that they invoke God with true fervor of heart, and that they are lively and elect members of the church; living meanwhile in truly cyclopean indifference and barbarism and in slavish subjection, and adulteries, murders and atrocious crimes."

This frightful state of morality, according to the authority from whom Spalding quotes, "is attributed without disguise even by the Lutherans themselves to the doctrines of Luther already alluded to."

K $\ddot{o}$ stlin, the Protestant author of a recent life of Luther, gives a picture of the spiritual condition of Wittenberg, the very centre of Protestant light and life, but little less dark than the representations given in Spalding's awful chapter. He says, "But more painful and harrassing to him (Luther) than even the threats of the Romanists and the attacks upon his teaching, which his own words, he was convinced, had long since refuted, was the condition of Wittenberg and the university. It was a favorite reproach against him of the Catholics that his doctrine yielded no fruits of strict morality. Notwithstanding all the rebukes which he had uttered for years, we hear of the old vices still rampant at Wittenberg—the vices of gluttony, of increasing intemperance and luxury, especially at baptisms and weddings: of pride in dress and the low-cut bodices of ladies; of rioting in the streets; of the low women who corrupted the students; of extortion, deceit, and usury in trade; and of the indifference and inability of the authorities and the police to put down open immorality and misdemeanors." Elsewhere the fact is mentioned that the condition of things described by K $\ddot{o}$ stlin was so intolerable to Luther that he had made up his mind to quit the place, and was with difficulty dissuaded from this purpose "by the united intercessions of the Elector and of the authorities of the university and of the town."

From the admirable work of Archdeacon Hare on Luther we learn that even the character of the great Reformer himself was frequently assailed in the Church of England, for the purpose of bringing discredit upon the peculiar truths brought to light and so ably and successfully established by his voice and pen. The period referred to is the second quarter of the present century—a period made memorable in the English Church by the rise and spread of Tractarianism and the excited controversies that broke out in consequence.

Referring to this movement Mr. Hare says: "Moreover, since that disastrous cloud has come over the religious minds of England, which leads so many of our divines to decry the Reformation and its authors, the most unfounded charges against Luther have found acceptance with many, who catch them up with a parrot-like volubility in repeating ugly words. Therefore, seeing that Luther's character is so closely connected with that of the Reformation, it must needs seem desirable that Luther's name should be cleared from all unmerited stigmas."

Again near the close of this volume this same writer, in justifying the size to which his book had grown, says, "But the question of Luther's character is intimately connected with the miserable controversies which are now disturbing our church; and though the decision of these controversies ought to turn on wholly different points, the enemies of Protestant truth have always felt they were gaining an advantage, if they could, by whatever artifices, detract from the fame of its first and greatest champion."

Facts such as those thus far given show very plainly, that in opposing the truth concerning justification, the adversaries place no little dependence upon the argument based upon the establishment of the immoral character of its advocates and professors.

The second argument relied on by our gainsayers is that the very leaders of the Reformation in discussing faith have said expressly that good works are of no consequence, provided only that men do not cease to believe. The inference is very plain. If the people are taught to regard faith as the only thing that is essential, and good works are spoken of disparagingly by the side of faith, then the neglect of the moral law will follow as a natural consequence.

The passages relied on to establish the fact of this direct and express immoral teaching are, however, far from being as numerous and plain as is desirable for the purpose intended; in truth, they are

significantly few when it is remembered how ample is the field from which they might be gathered, Luther alone having published no less than seven hundred and fifteen different works during his lifetime, "sending them forth at one period," as Mr. Hare says, "almost like flights of birds." But few as they are, all that is possible has been made out of them to the detriment of a doctrine humiliating and hateful to the pride and self-righteousness of the unrenewed heart. But let us hear the accusers themselves.

Cardinal Bellarmine says: "Protestants think that man can be saved although he does no good works, nor observes the divine commands. This I prove from the words of Luther; for in his book on Christian Liberty he thus writes: 'Good works do not make a man good, nor bad ones make him bad.' Also, in another passage he says: 'Where there is faith, no sin can hurt.'" Concerning these extracts Davenant says: "These and other things of the same kind, Bellarmine has scraped together from parts of Luther's writings, to make it be supposed that the necessity of good works is entirely set aside by the Reformer."

Moehler, theological professor at Munich, in his celebrated work on Symbolism, cites for condemnation the following passage of Luther's from his "Babylonish Captivity:" "Now thou seest how rich is the Christian or the baptized man; for though he will, he cannot lose his salvation, however great his sins may be, unless he refuse to believe. No sin can damn him but unbelief alone."

In a foot note this same author gives another extract from a letter by Luther to Melanchthon: "Sin lustily, but be yet more lusty in faith and rejoice in Christ, who is the conqueror of sin, of death, and of the world. Sin we must, so long as we remain here. It suffices that through the riches of the glory of God, we know the Lamb which taketh away the sins of the world; from him no sin will sever us, though a million times in a day we should commit fornication or murder." This certainly seems to grant all the license to sin that the most depraved heart could ask for.

Nampon, in his "Catholic Doctrine," quotes the same passage, giving parts not found in the preceding extract: "If you preach grace, preach the reality and not the appearance of it; if grace be a reality, bring it a true and substantial sin (to cure) and not a mere semblance of sin. Sin then and sin stoutly, but still more stoutly trust and rejoice in Jesus Christ, who is the conqueror of sin and



death and the world." Then after stating that sin, however often committed, will not separate us from Christ, he concludes his quotation with the following sentence: "Can you believe that a Lamb so precious has not superabundantly paid the ransom of all our crimes?"

Melanchthon is also cited by these two authors as expressing sentiments almost equally as objectionable as those taken from Luther. These extracts are, of course, produced by these writers for the purpose of showing that, as Mœhler expressed it, "by the side of faith the greatest sins can be committed."

Again, Mœhler in his chapter on good works, after having asserted that we deny all internal connection between salvation and holiness, illustrates and supports his assertion by the opposition excited against George Major for teaching that good works are necessary to salvation. Though Major's object was to counteract the neglect of the divine precepts, so prevalent among members of the church, yet he was finally obliged to give up the use of this form of expression.

Melanchthon also at one time approved and employed this same formula, to prevent misapprehension of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but subsequently omitted it from his writings.

At a colloquium held in Worms by appointment of King Ferdinand, in hope of bringing about a union between the Catholics and the Lutherans, this hostility to the necessity of good works for salvation was again manifested, especially on the part of the Saxon deputies. These more rigid Lutherans insisted on it that, before entering into a conference with the Catholics, certain errors, claimed to be held by a considerable portion of the adherents to the Augsburg Confession, should be condemned. One of these errors thus to be rejected is our famous proposition—good works necessary to salvation. To this demand Melanchthon ultimately, and after much hesitation, agreed, though not soon enough to prevent our Weimar theologians from withdrawing from the conference.

Besides it is a well-known fact that the Formula of Concord, one of the acknowledged Confessions of the church, rejects this proposition as inconsistent with the words of the apostle Paul. Now in this determined opposition to the formula before us and in its final total rejection, there does seem to be plain and decided evidence in favor of the charge that our doctrine does "prohibit good works."

The last argument, and the one mainly relied upon to make good the accusation of favoring immorality, is that the logical and inevi-

table tendency of the doctrine of justification by faith alone is to produce neglect of the moral law. Owen, in his work on justification, speaking of several things which are generally pleaded against this doctrine by Papists, Socinians, etc., says: "The first and fountain of all others is that the doctrine of justification by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, renders our personal righteousness needless and overthrows all necessity of a holy life."

The *Christian Observer*, an able periodical of England and a staunch and powerful defender of the evangelical faith against the whole Oxford school of divinity, remarks, in the volume for 1836, "that parties who taught justification by faith and *something else* accused all who opposed it of sapping the foundation of moral virtue."

Bossuet in his "Variations of Protestantism" says, speaking of Melancthon: "He saw himself always pressed with this question of the Catholics: 'If we are agreeable to God independently of all good works, and all fulfilling of the law, even of that which the Holy Ghost works in us, how and whereto are good works necessary?' Melancthon perplexed himself in vain to ward off this blow and to elude this dreadful consequence: 'therefore good works according to you are not necessary.'"

Nampon, already referred to, writes thus: "When men wish to emancipate themselves upon a system from all laws human and divine, they may imagine many such systems." Then after having mentioned Pantheism and Fourierism as two of these systems, he describes a third according to which "men may acknowledge sin, recognize it in themselves, but proclaim that it is necessary, unavoidable, \* \* \* and at the same time perfectly compatible with the friendship of God, predestination to life, and with salvation. Of these three systems the last seems to me to be the worst. It is degrading, void of consolation, inconsistent and immoral; nevertheless it is that which was eagerly adopted by the leading doctors of the Reformation, by the Lutherans and still more by the Calvinists." Here the audacious assertion is made that the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith is a system devised for the express purpose of setting men free from all laws, human and divine—a system framed designedly to allow men to live according to all the lusts of their evil hearts and yet at the same time enable them to cherish the hope that they are in favor with God and shall inherit everlasting life.

Socinus charges Protestant divines with teaching "that God justi-

eth the ungodly, not only those that are so and whilst they are so, but although they continue so; that they required no inherent righteousness or holiness in any one, nor could do so on their own principles, seeing the imputed righteousness of Christ is sufficient for them, although they live in sin, are not washed nor cleansed, nor give themselves up to the ways of duty and obedience to God whereby he may be pleased, and so bring in libertinism and antinomianism into the Church." These plainly expressed views of this bold heretic are gathered by Owen from a treatise written by Socinus in opposition to the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's satisfaction.

Even the Quakers, as shown by Mœhler in citations from Barclay and other Friends, who have confounded justification and sanctification very much after the manner of the Catholics, making the former to depend on a work wrought in us and corresponding in degree to the progress of that internal work, whilst commending Luther for opposing the mere external works of the Catholic Church, yet censure him for going to the opposite extreme and denying the necessity of good works.

Goodsir, a clergyman of the Established Church of Scotland, declares: "It is impossible to get rid of the fact that there is in this dogma an insoluble puzzle, paradox, or contradiction, and that one of its contradictory propositions is armed in a logical sense with an irresistible antiomian force." The dogma he is speaking of is that of justification by faith alone.

The same writer says: "Absolutely every reason and motive proving the necessity for entering on a new life and living in obedience to the commandment of the Lord, is flatly contradicted by the explicit statement of the doctrine of justification or salvation set forth authoritatively in the Westminster Confession of Faith."

Concerning our own symbol he uses the following language: "It came clearly into view in my examination of the Augsburg Confession that a most disastrous collision between justification or salvation and the divine commands enjoining righteousness and holiness, is the direct and inevitable result of making the great gospel benefit a purely external or imputative, as well as a purely gratuitous thing. For, whereas the divine commands, promulgated by the gospel, declare that repentance, regeneration, righteousness and holiness are necessary in order to the reaching and enjoying of

eternal life; this is flatly contradicted by the declaration that these graces are neither elements of justification or salvation, for it is external or imputative; nor conditions of justification or salvation, for it is as well gratuitous, as the undoubted ground or title for the attainment and enjoyment of eternal life." The objection of this writer to the Confessions mentioned, is, in short, the following: from the idea of justification, that of sanctification is absolutely excluded, and then whatever there is left in it is bestowed gratuitously, or, which is the same thing, unconditionally, or at the most upon condition of a mere instrumental faith from which, in like manner, every moral quality has been carefully eliminated. And yet the effect of such a justification thus bestowed is nothing less than forgiveness of sin and a title to everlasting life, and all accomplished without the need of any sanctifying element in the justification bestowed, or any moral virtue in the faith through which alone it is received. Verily, this does look as though at last we had found a way of salvation without being obliged to give up sin—a way of getting into the kingdom of heaven without any change in our moral character.

Bishop Jebb and Alexander Knox, a layman of the Anglican Church, regard justification by faith as a mere notion or cold abstraction, and therefore a nonentity. They then infer that as a notion it can have no effect upon the heart, no moral influence on the mind and conduct. To remedy this defect they propose to adopt the Romish expedient of confounding justification with sanctification. Such is substantially the account of the *Christian Observer* of (the views of) these two friends in their correspondence with each other. This is, in general, also the view of the Tractarians, as Bishop McIlvain has demonstrated in his excellent work on Righteousness by Faith, in which he proves that the Oxford divinity was very largely the development of rudimental principles set forth in Knox's "Remains."

Prof. Ritschl, of the University of Göttingen, in his able work on justification and reconciliation, regards the attempt of Protestant writers to show that the faith which justifies involves also the ability and the inclination to well doing, as a failure, thus leaving a missing link between justification and obedience. Of Zwingli's definition that saving faith is at the same time the disposition to perform good works, he says: "The combination is merely asserted, but not

vindicated." Prof. Ritschl, it must be remembered, is not a Catholic theologian.

Dr. Godet, Professor of Theology in Neuchatel, and the author of many most thoughtful and helpful books, also a Protestant, expresses himself as follows on the subject under consideration: "Protestantism, we must confess, has always shown itself weak and embarrassed when called upon to point out precisely the organic connection between these two elements of salvation—forgiveness and holiness. Theologians of this way of thinking have generally looked for this connection in the feeling of gratitude, or else have contented themselves with simply adding on the exposition of the law to that of grace, without seeking to discover the inner relation which connects the latter with faith and the former with obedience." The juxtaposition he judges insufficient, and the feeling of gratitude does not constitute a proper foundation for the duty of Christian sanctification.

Beard, in the Hibbard Lectures for 1883, on the "Reformation in its relation to Modern Thought and Knowledge," declares that anti-nomianism follows logically from a hard and external interpretation of justification by faith.

Swedenborg, himself the son of a Lutheran bishop of Sweden, gives it as his decided conviction that the doctrine of justification by faith is subversive of morality and extremely pernicious to all practical Christianity, and, accordingly, in his "True Christian Religion" he opposes it with all his power, in season and out of season. He assures us, on the authority of an angel, that those who embrace the doctrine here are doomed to take up their abode hereafter in a desert in which there is no grass, whilst those who rely on both faith and charity are permitted to dwell with the angels. And he further informs us that as the result of his own persistent efforts with him, Luther himself has become convinced that his favorite doctrine had been taken, not from the word of God, but from his own intelligence, that he frequently laughs at his former dogmas as diametrically opposed to the Bible, and, admitting that he seized upon the idea of faith to break away from the Catholics, wonders however how one crazy man could make so many others crazy, so that they could not see that the Scriptures were against his doctrine.

Of course, if this testimony is to be admitted against us, if it must be conceded that our heroic leader, who while on earth feared



neither devils nor flames, has struck the flag, and if residence in a monotonous, grassless plain is the just award of heaven to such as hold this doctrine, then it is all up with justification by faith alone. But when we remember that this same witness also testified that the Christian Church had come to an end on the 19th of June, 1770, and that information to that effect had been sent out by Christ himself to the whole spiritual world, and that a new church should be raised up among the Gentiles, there is some hope that his testimony against Lutherans may be ruled out.

A stronger argument, however, against the moral effects of our doctrine than that brought from the regions visited by this wonderful dreamer, is involved in the well established fact that many of the staunchest and most devoted friends of justification felt and acted on the conviction that there ought to be some modification in the form of its expression. Thus, for example, Osiander proposed to include sanctification as an element in justification. Melancthon, Major, Menius and others, wished to guard the doctrine as ordinarily stated, by the declaration that good works, whilst not necessary to justification, were necessary to salvation. Others, while adhering to the approved mode of expression, sought to prevent antinomian consequences by extending the meaning of faith so as to make it really equivalent to faith and works. Such was the course advocated by Lauterwald, of Upper Austria, and Bishop Bull, of England. The same desire for a qualified statement of this important doctrine manifested itself among English Protestants. J. T. Goodsir, of the National Church of Scotland formerly, makes the declaration that for a period of a hundred and twenty-five years, to the adoption of the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1646, "controversies were caused in the Protestant world by the collision between an external and gratuitous justification and the moral requirements of revealed religion, and that it was urged in these controversies that righteousness and holiness were not merely necessary, but necessary either as elements or conditions of justification, and consequently necessary to the enjoyment of eternal life."

But even after the settlement of the controversy in favor of an unconditional justification by the adoption of the Westminster Confession, and especially its eleventh chapter, the desire for a change or qualification continued to manifest itself, and in about seventy-five years afterward was influential enough in the Assemblies of the

Church of Scotland of 1720 and 1722, to pass an act declaring "good works to be necessary to everlasting salvation;" thus materially modifying the doctrine of justification by faith alone, as well as diminishing its influence indefinitely. Now, as already remarked, this persistent agitation in favor of some more guarded statement seems plainly to denote that in the judgment of many of its most faithful friends the doctrine of justification in its present form was easily susceptible of such interpretation as to lend encouragement to evil doers to continue in their sinful course.

Having now set forth the nature of the charge brought against us, with sufficient minuteness and fullness to enable us to understand definitely what the accusation involves and also to appreciate the force thereof, let us next proceed to inquire what defence may be set up against the indictment preferred.

#### THE DEFENCE.

Our Article unhesitatingly declares the charge to be false, and promptly and energetically goes on to justify itself for pleading not guilty.

The writings of the accused are summoned to prove that useful instruction has been imparted in regard to the duties of men in the various relations of life; and that this instruction has even had the happy effect of bringing about a decided improvement in the preaching of the adversaries, causing them to say less about the childish and unprofitable things before discussed, and more about faith.

Next there follows a re-statement of the doctrine assailed, and a confirmation of the same from the Scriptures and the Fathers.

Then there is given a full definition of the faith to which justification is ascribed. This is felt to be a vital point in the defence. For if faith be merely a belief that what is revealed in the Scriptures is true, then it would indeed become a most difficult thing to maintain that the faith which justifies does also sanctify. But faith has an element beyond belief, viz., "trust which comforts and lifts up disquieted minds."

After this comes an explanation as to the manner in which faith produces good works. By faith the Holy Spirit is received; by the Holy Spirit the heart is renewed and new affections are begotten, the fruit of all which is the very thing we are accused of prohibiting—viz., good works.

The line of defence thus adopted by our Confessors is in every respect admirable, having unquestionably been based upon and suggested by an experimental knowledge of the workings of faith as observed in their own hearts and lives. We shall use the long-tried weapons laid up in this arsenal of truth in attempting to resist the attack upon the faith delivered to us by these faithful soldiers of the cross.

The portion of our Article which consists in a re-statement and confirmation of the doctrine of justification need not be dwelt upon in this discourse, it being sufficient to refer the reader to the able and satisfactory discussion thereof in the Holman Lecture on the Fourth Article of the Augsburg Confession, published in the October number of the *Evangelical Quarterly Review* for 1869. The design and advantage of its introduction into this Article must not, however, by any means be passed by without due consideration ; for it is inserted here as part of the answer to the charge stated at the beginning, and involves a most important argument in our favor. They mean to say, we can show that our doctrine concerning faith is taught in the Scriptures, and being a Scripture truth it cannot possibly give encouragement to evil doing nor prove a hindrance to works of righteousness and holiness. Having established it as a doctrine from God, we can say it is holy, just and good ; and if in any case it is claimed that that which is good was made death to any one, we insist upon it that it was not the doctrine concerning faith that deceived and slew him, but his own sins wrought death in him by that which itself is good. Whatever is done, therefore, to show that this doctrine as held and expounded by our Church is derived from the Scriptures, is so much done to vindicate it and us from the charge of forbidding good works. For if the fact that justification hinders good works is proof that justification is not true, then also the fact that the doctrine is true becomes proof that it is not and cannot be detrimental to the cause of morality.

The other arguments contained in our Article will all be made use of at the proper time, in our answer to the charge to which our Confessors refused to plead guilty.

Believing that all the evidence furnished by our adversaries to substantiate the charge they have made, is contained in the three propositions mentioned near the beginning of this lecture, we shall proceed to consider these and in the order in which they were before enumerated :

I. The first of these is an argument from the character of the professors of any particular doctrine to the character of the doctrine itself, or from the character of the effect to that of the cause. The doctrine of justification by faith alone, it is maintained, must be immoral and false, because the manners and lives of those who have embraced it are corrupt and ungodly.

In replying to this, let us first hear the answer Bishop Davenant gives to this objection as made by Cardinal Bellarmine: "What frivolous arguing! Many Lutherans live wickedly, therefore Luther denied the necessity of good works. As if many Papists, many cardinals, yea Roman Pontiffs, did not live very wickedly, although the necessity of good works is by no means denied in the Roman Church. \* \* \* And lastly, what outstrips all the folly is that a Romanist should infer error of doctrine from corrupt manners; a process of reasoning by which Rome herself, the chief seat of all wickedness (as all the world can testify) must be concluded to be herself the very sink of all errors." It is certainly not going beyond the truth to say with Owen that "those who at present oppose this doctrine do not in holiness or righteousness, in the exercise of faith, love, zeal, self-denial and all other Christian graces, surpass those who adhere to it;" or with Bishop O'Brien that "this doctrine has no reason to fear the result of a comparison of what those who hold it have been enabled to do and to suffer in the cause of Christ, with any sacrifices or any labors which have been the fruits of any other view of the gospel."

And that a very considerable portion of Catholics are far from being worthy to have their names appear in the calendar of saints, is evident from admissions by Catholic writers themselves. Dr. Milner, for example, an able controversialist of the Church of Rome, writes as follows in his "End of Controversy:—" "I, as well as Baronius, Bellarmine, and other Catholic writers, have unequivocally admitted that some few of our pontiffs have disgraced themselves by their crimes and given just cause of scandal to Christendom. I acknowledge with the same unreservedness that the lives of very many Catholics in this and in other parts of the Church are a disgrace to that Holy Catholic Church which they profess to believe in—unhappy members of the true religion by whom the name of God is blasphemed among the nations."

Now from this frank acknowledgment it appears that the lives of

those who adhere to the supposed true faith are, to say the least, no better than those of the members of the Protestant Church. If, therefore, the Lutheran view of justification is false and immoral because the lives of many of its adherents are sinful, then it follows likewise that the Catholic view is false and immoral, for the lives of its adherents are corrupt likewise. Accordingly, there is neither justification by faith without works, nor justification by faith with works. This of course is an absurdity, and so is the argument that leads to it.

But besides its being absurd, necessitating a conclusion known to be false, the argument is also impracticable and therefore without value. In the case of the persons whose immoral lives are to prove the immoral effects of justification, it must certainly be shown that they had indeed actually embraced the doctrine taught by Luther; not merely that they had in swarms renounced the Catholic faith, and professed the Lutheran, but that they had, from the heart and with a correct understanding, adopted the same. The establishment of this single fact in the case before us is by no means a simple matter when the peculiar circumstances of the period referred to are taken into consideration; and yet the demand that the fact be established is just as reasonable as the demand that before the death of any individual be charged to the mal-practice of a certain physician, it should be shown that the deceased had actually been under his treatment and had made use of his prescriptions.

Then again, after having shown the co-existence of belief in Luther's theory of salvation and general corruption of manners in the same subjects, it ought to be made to appear that the corruption was really produced by their belief, and not by any one of the many other causes that give rise to it. And when it is remembered that the neglect of good works complained of is found where no theory whatever as to the way of salvation has been adopted, yea, even where the Catholic view itself is held, it can readily be seen that it is a matter of extreme difficulty by any mere process of reasoning to show to a certainty that the persons referred to by Bellarmine would have lived better lives had they not come under the influence of Luther's doctrine concerning justification. On account of the difficulties involved in this method of argument by deduction, it becomes simply impracticable and therefore useless. If the connection between belief in justification as taught by the Lutheran Church and



disregard for the requirements of the moral law can be established at all, it must be done in some other way than the one now under consideration. The only effectual method, in fact, of arguing from the conduct of the adherents to a certain faith against the faith itself, is by the process of induction. Cases must be adduced of persons or communities that before adopting said faith were living in obedience to the will of God but afterwards manifested a total disregard of the same.

Now this very thing is attempted to be done in the work by Dr. Döllinger on the "Reformation as to its Interior Development and Effects," as may be seen in the extracts taken from it by the *Dublin Review* for Sept., 1848, and inserted in Spalding's History of the Reformation. By means of exclusively Protestant testimony, it is claimed that the people of Germany in general, who, under Catholic influence, had been virtuous and pious, became licentious and ungodly to an unusual degree upon adopting the Protestant faith. Luther declares that "nowadays men are more corrupt, covetous, hard-hearted, licentious and wicked than under the papacy. \* \* \* Our evangelicals are sevenfold more wicked than before." Melancthon says, that never in the days of our fathers had there existed such gluttony as now. Althamer writes: "Nobody cares to instruct his child, his servant, his maid, or any of his dependents, in the word of God or his fear. And thus our young generation is the worst that ever existed." It is further claimed that the testimonies gathered from Protestant documents describe the social condition, not only of a portion of Germany under the Reformation, but of the country in general, specially naming the following: Saxony, Hesse, Nassau, Brandenburg, Strasburg, Nuremburg, Stralsund, Thorn, Mecklenburg, Westphalia, Pomerania, Friesland, Denmark and Sweden.

It is further asserted that "districts in which crimes were unknown were scarcely initiated in the principles of the Reformation till they became corrupted to the heart's core." Ditmarsen in Holstein is cited as a remarkable instance.

The universities are declared to have become more corrupt after the Reformation than before, being pronounced by Protestants themselves "asylums of dishonesty and vice," and "dens of immorality, to which parents feared to send their children." And from Wolfgang Menzel, Spalding shows that the imperial court of Vienna

afforded, by its dignity and morality, a bright contrast to the majority of Protestant courts.

Now here we are furnished with a fearful array of evidence, gathered exclusively from Protestant sources, which seems abundantly sufficient to prove the immoral effects of the Reformation of the 16th century. Admitting, as I suppose we must, that the state of things in Germany is correctly represented in this testimony, do the facts furnished necessitate the conclusion our opponents draw therefrom in regard to the tendency of the Protestant faith? We maintain they do not, and for the following reasons:

The facts relied on to verify their theory are taken from too narrow a strip of the entire field of investigation to justify a conclusion as to the character of the whole. True, this at first glance does not seem to be the case, inasmuch as the testimony is taken from common life, from life in the universities and at the courts of the nobles and of the reigning princes; not from one section of Germany merely, but from no less than fourteen different countries which are specifically enumerated; not from one institution of learning only, but from all; not from one Protestant court, but from the majority of them. This certainly does look as though the experiments were sufficiently varied and general to justify the conclusion that what was true in so many cases, must be true in all, or at all events in a majority of cases, and reveal the existence of a law to the effect that the adoption of the doctrine of justification by faith is followed by the neglect of God's commandments.

Nevertheless, on closer examination it will be found that, in spite of the long list of particulars, the experiment is really but one made of one people, one country, one period, and one general condition of things. The people examined, whether taken from the court, the university, the field or the shop, from German or Scandinavian lands, all belong to one common family—the Gothic.

The time in which the experiment is made is the remarkable period of transition from the bondage of the papacy to the freedom of the gospel. This one circumstance, that the numerous facts adduced are supplied by one people, subject to one common influence, goes very far toward overthrowing the whole argument based upon the evidence so laboriously collected by Dr. Döllinger in his *History of the Reformation*.

Then again the testimony of the facts is not uniformly in favor of

the theory to be proved, even in the one period and country from which they were obtained, for it is a truth beyond question that among those who professed the new faith there were found many most godly men and women whose holy and devoted lives reflected great credit on the religion they had embraced. This is a second circumstance calculated to vitiate the argument we are examining.

And when the experiment is made, as it must be to have any value, in other nations and in other periods, it will be found that there are many instances in which countries adopting the Protestant faith were not only improved thereby, but attained to a moral and religious condition not easily paralleled in the best Roman Catholic country in the world. This, with the other considerations presented, is enough completely to overthrow the argument by induction from experiments made "in the circle of the Lutheran Confessions," and to prove beyond a doubt that whatever the facts may signify, they do not serve to establish it as a general truth, that the acceptance of the doctrine of justification by faith alone results in neglect of the law of God. They really, formidable as they appear from their number and character, prove nothing more than that the introduction of the Reformation into the various countries of Germany was accompanied by an apparent deterioration of the public morals, and this result can be most satisfactorily accounted for by the peculiar circumstances under which the Reformation was brought about, without any admissions derogatory to the moral tendency of the glorious doctrine which our church has the honor to have given back again to the world.

The circumstances we refer to as accounting for the facts adduced by Dr. Döllinger are the following :

The long-forgotten truth which Luther was raised up to set forth and defend is one of the things of the Spirit of God which the natural man cannot receive, because spiritual discernment is required ; a doctrine to the reception of which a genuine inner religious experience is essential.

Besides, it had to be set forth in terms peculiarly liable to be misunderstood.

Mr. Beard, in the Hibbert Lectures for 1883, well says : " All the words to which faith answers have in different proportions an intellectual and a moral side. On one side they rise into 'trust,' and imply a personal affection ; on the the other they sink into 'belief,'

and may mean no more than an intellectual assent. But unhappily 'glaube' alone covers the whole ground. It is faith and belief too." On this account justification by faith may very readily be taken to mean no more than justification by belief, which, as any one can perceive, is a very different thing from what Luther maintained.

Again, many of the teachers of this doctrine were not competent to exhibit it with the clearness and correctness necessary to a proper apprehension of it on the part of the hearers. "Most of the preachers," writes Bucer, "imagine that if they inveigh stoutly against the anti-Christians (the Papists) and chatter away on a few unimportant fruitless questions, and then assail their brethren also, they have discharged their duty admirably." Seckendorf assures us that some preached of nothing but forgiveness and faith, neglecting the doctrine concerning sanctification and good works, and thus weakened the desire of holiness. Ledderhose, in his life of Melanchthon, informs us that Melanchthon was commissioned to prepare a manual of instructions for the ministers in the Electorate of Saxony. The very fact of such a work being ordered, as well as the instructions given in the same, show clearly that the teachers themselves needed to be taught. This is a second circumstance that must be considered in accounting for the exceptional moral effects attending the first introduction of the Reformation.

And lastly, this highly spiritual doctrine, to a great extent entrusted as a matter of necessity to men poorly fitted to teach it, was to be lodged in the understandings and brought to bear upon the lives of a people still less prepared to receive it. Luther complained of the condition of things in Saxony: "Help, dear Lord, what frequent distress have I seen, because the common people, particularly in villages, know nothing at all of Christian doctrine, and it is but too true that many ministers are unskillful and unfit to teach. And yet all are called Christians, are baptized, and enjoy the holy sacraments, and do not even know the Lord's Prayer, or the Creed, or the Ten Commandments, and live on like the brutes."

Melanchthon often went out and wept, as he writes himself: "What can be offered in justification, that these poor people have hitherto been left in such great ignorance and stupidity? My heart bleeds when I regard this misery. Often when we have completed the visitation of a place I go to one side and pour forth my distress in tears. And who would not mourn to see the faculties of man so

utterly neglected, and that his soul, which is able to learn and grasp so much, does not even know anything of its Creator and Lord." Seckendorf, as quoted by Hare, declares "that through the sloth or unfaithfulness of their priests before Luther began to preach, the great body of the common people were kept in ignorance of religion and merely urged to a servile observance of ceremonies." That most of them were so rude "as not even to recognize enormous sins to be such, nor have any thought of avoiding them, being accustomed to rely upon the outward expiations hitherto practiced, by means of confession and ecclesiastical satisfactions."

Now take all together: a doctrine requiring a true knowledge of self and of the Saviour of mankind, is to be taught by men in many cases ill-fitted for the work, to a people such as described by the testimony above given, and what conception is it likely that they would form in the main of the grand truth whereby the world was to be made glad? Uninformed and undisciplined in mind, ignorant of the most essential parts of God's word, morally so abased as almost to have lost the very power of discriminating between right and wrong in the clearest instances, accustomed to a method of forgiveness after sinning which instead of regarding amendment of life as at all essential made light of it and attached all importance to mere outward observances, such as confessions, repeating *Pater Nosters*, fastings, bodily mortifications and other mere external ceremonies, is it to be wondered at that people in such a case would by a free justification understand their former doctrine of penance to be meant with the penance left out; or in other words, that they would conceive Luther's doctrine to denote that they could sin as before and be spared the trouble besides of making confession to a priest and submitting to the penalties imposed by him? The practical effect of such a view by such a people would in all likelihood be a state of things very much like that depicted by Dr. Döllinger's plain-spoken and faithful witnesses. Not to the legitimate effect of the soul-comforting doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, but to the degraded intellectual and moral condition of the people to whom it was proclaimed, must the results complained of be attributed—a condition of things that Luther and the Reformation inherited, but did not create.

We have thus far proceeded on the supposition that the fact asserted by our opponents in respect to the superior moral condition



of the German people before the Reformation was correct—a supposition absolutely essential to their argument—and yet have been able, as we think, to make it appear that, granting what they assert, their testimony does not prove our doctrine guilty of prohibiting good works. But we honestly believe that too much was admitted: that notwithstanding appearances, the people in reality were just as corrupt before the Reformation as after it. Like an unruly son held in check by the strong hand of a determined father, the masses were restrained in a measure from overt acts of sin by penances, purgatory, and hell; but as soon as the fear of these things was taken away they acted out the evil nature in them without let or hindrance, just as the morally uncultured boy referred to gives free reins to his untamed passions the moment he leaves the parental home for college. In both cases there seems to be a change for the worse, but the change is only apparent; they were not saints before nor afterwards. In the case of Saxony the testimony we have produced before shows that its moral condition was as low as it could well be conceived to be. In respect to Ditmarsen, a district in Holstein, it is claimed that it was remarkably free from certain crimes before the Catholic religion was abolished in 1532, but that in less than ten years after, “public crimes prevailed so universally that neither preaching, teaching, instruction, menaces, nor the terror of God’s wrath and his righteous judgment, was of any avail.” Now will any man in his senses believe that if these people had been as harmless and pious as represented they would so soon thereafter have become so fearfully corrupt? Verily, it requires a total renunciation of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints to accept a claim like this. And what we have good reason to believe as to Saxony and the district in Holstein specially singled out, is, no doubt, true also in regard to the other countries of Germany and Scandinavia—they were fully as bad in reality before their conversion to Protestantism as afterwards; and we feel sure that if Catholic writers had been as frank as ours were in describing the moral condition of their people, it would not have required the indefatigable application of a Döllinger to have collected a mass of evidence from their own writings equal in all respects to that contained in the famous work on the Inner Development of the Reformation. The true verdict to be given in the case under consideration we believe to be that drawn up by Beard in the Hibbert Lectures, in a note at the end of his

fourth chapter, where, in commenting on Dr. Döllinger's work, he speaks as follows: "Again in a certain way the Reformation inherited the sins of the preceding age. It arose in part out of the dissolution of morals in which mediæval Christianity had ended, and with which it had more or less successfully to cope. May not the worst that can truly be said of it be, that it had to deal with a corrupt generation, and left it little better than it found it? The monasteries were full of monks and nuns without vocation, who embraced Protestantism for the sake of the liberty which it offered to them, and were afterwards its disgrace." Or, in other words, many of the converts to the new doctrine who had been left in a fearfully corrupt moral condition by the religion under which they had been reared, are afterwards made to furnish evidence by their unimproved morals against the faith they have professed, but whose transforming power they have not experienced.

II. Having now disposed of the objection to our faith based upon the character of its adherents, let us see what force there is in their second charge, which accuses Protestants of favoring immorality by their direct and express teachings.

So far is this from being the fact that the very opposite is the case. Our confessors in the Article under consideration refer to their writings on the Ten Commandments as proof of the useful instruction imparted by them in respect to the various Christian relations, duties and works. In the Article itself they say with the utmost plainness that good works should and must be done. A separate Article—the sixth—is introduced into the Augsburg Confession, setting forth the necessity of good works as the fruits of faith. The works of Luther and Melancthon abound in passages enjoining obedience to the precepts of God's word. "Both subjects," says Luther, "even faith and works, ought to be diligently taught and urged. For if works alone are taught, as is the case in the papacy, faith is lost sight of; if faith alone is taught, immediately carnal men imagine that good works are not necessary." Archdeacon Hare regards Luther's concluding remarks on the Ten Commandments in the Larger Catechism as in themselves a sufficient answer to the charges of antinomianism made in Hallam's *Literature of Europe*. The passage quoted by Mr. Hare sets forth the superior excellence of the Commandments with great force and beauty. Ranke's admirable words

also deserve a place in this connection: "It is in this that Luther seeks his chief glory, in applying the principles of the gospel to common life. More especially did he deem himself bound to instruct the various classes of society—the magistrates and those under authority, fathers and other members of families—concerning their duties from a religious point of view. He displays an incomparable talent for popular teaching. He directs the parsons how they are to preach, so as to edify the common people; the school-masters, how they are to instruct the young in the several stages, to combine secular knowledge with religion, to avoid all exaggeration; the masters of families, how they are to train their households in the fear of God. He draws up a series of texts to guide all in right living, the clergy and the laity, men and women, parents and children, servants and maids, young and old. He gives them a form for blessing and grace at table, for morning and evening prayer. He is the patriarch of the severe and devout domestic discipline and manners of the families in Northern Germany."

Equally decided as that of Luther is the testimony borne by Melanchthon, by Chemnitz, and many others, in behalf of the importance and obligation of obedience to the moral law. Osiander himself a Lutheran theologian, entertained the idea that according to Melanchthon and others God justified the believers without making any change in their moral condition. This charge was repudiated by his opponents, who denied that by justification they intended such a judgment passed by God upon the sinner as leaves him inwardly unchanged. They affirmed, on the other hand, that with the declaration that the believer is righteous, is immediately connected the working of the Holy Spirit toward illumination, renovation and new obedience. They also pointed out to Osiander that they maintained, as a result of God's sentence of justification, a real union of Christ and the Holy Spirit with the believer. Such is the account Prof. Ritschl gives of the difference between Osiander and Melanchthon on the subject of justification.

In addition to this testimony of leading individuals, we have the evidence of our confessional writings as to what was taught in our churches on the subject of good works. The Augsburg Confession in Article Sixth says: "Also they teach that this faith should bring forth good fruits, and that men ought to do the good works commanded of God, because it is God's will." "We should and must

do good works," says the Apology, "because God requires them: they are the fruits of faith." The Formula of Concord declares: "We believe, teach and confess that all men, but especially those who are regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost, are under obligation to do good works \* \* \* \* Faith is first enkindled in us by the Holy Ghost in conversion, through the hearing of the gospel. This faith apprehends the grace of God in Christ, through which the individual is justified. Afterward he is also renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. And after such renewal and sanctification the fruits or good works follow. This is not to be understood as if justification and renewal are separated from each other, so that true faith can sometimes exist in connection with an evil design for a season; but here the order alone is exhibited according to which the one precedes or succeeds the other." Mœhler, the Catholic author of "Symbolism," admits that there is another side to the Lutheran principle of faith, whereby it becomes the fruitful mother of love and good works. Bossuet, another Catholic divine, also acknowledges: "Luther did not exclude from justification a sincere repentance, namely, the horror of sin and the will to do good, and, in short, the conversion of the heart, and judged it as absurd as we do to be justified without contrition or repentance."

Now from the foregoing extracts it is evident that the general tone and spirit of Protestant writers is decidedly favorable to morality and holiness; and knowing their general intention to be to commend and encourage the cause of righteousness, we can feel sure that if any passages are found in any of their writings of an opposite character, they must be capable of an interpretation consistent both with true morality and sound doctrine; or if there is a real departure from the truth, it must be regarded not as a wilful sin on their part, but one of infirmity, such as any man, however advanced in the divine life, is liable to commit. In regard to the passages commonly cited to show that Luther and Melancthon maintained sentiments immoral in themselves, and therefore necessarily promotive of vice, it will be found on due examination that there is nothing in them to warrant the unfavorable conclusion often drawn therefrom.

Bellarmino, as we have already seen in the former part of this lecture, criticises the following sentence from Luther's Treatise on Christian Liberty: "Good works do not make a man good, nor bad

ones make him bad." That this expression, properly understood, contains no error, but a most important truth, can be seen at a glance by any unprejudiced mind. The correctness of this judgment will appear quite readily when the whole passage of which it forms a part, is examined. It is found in Luther's Primary Works, recently issued by the Lutheran Publication Society, on page 121, and reads as follows: "A bishop when he consecrates a church, confirms children, or performs any other duty of his office, is not consecrated as bishop by these works; nay, unless he had been previously consecrated as bishop, not one of these works would have any validity; they would be foolish, childish and ridiculous. Thus a Christian, being consecrated by his faith, does good works; but he is not by these works made a more sacred person, or more a Christian. That is the effect of faith alone; nay, unless he were previously a believer and a Christian, none of his works would have any value at all; they would really be impious and damnable sins. True, then, are these two sayings; good works do not make a man good, but a good man does good works. Bad works do not make a man bad, but a bad man does bad works. Thus it is always necessary that the substance or person should be good before any good works can be done, and that good works should follow and proceed from a good person. As Christ says, a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. \* \* \* As then trees must exist before their fruit, and as the fruit does not make the tree either good or bad, but on the contrary a tree of either kind produces fruit of the same kind; so must first the person of the man be good or bad before he can do either a good or bad work; and his works do not make him bad or good, but he himself makes his works either bad or good. We may see the same in all handicrafts. A bad or good house does not make a bad or good builder, but a good or bad builder makes a good or bad house. And in general, no work makes the workman such as it is itself; but the workman makes the work such as he is himself. Such is the case, too, with the works of men. Such as the man himself is, whether in faith or in unbelief, such is his work, good if it be done in faith, bad if in unbelief." Now in all this there certainly is nothing worthy of condemnation, for it is but an exhibition of the truth taught by Christ himself in Matthew vii. 17, 18, that if any man would do the works commanded of God, his first concern must be to be renewed in the



spirit of his mind by the grace of Christ through the operation of the Holy Ghost. Yea, instead of being held up to the scorn of the world for uttering ungodly sentiments, Luther deserves no little praise for being able to enter so fully into the profound meaning of our Lord's deep saying, and setting it forth so clearly and plainly. There is in it a world of wisdom and practical instruction for all who are concerned either to make themselves or others better. The world over, the first and instinctive impulse is to begin at the wrong end in the improvement of character—by putting off the bad fruit and trying to force the production of good fruit. This holds good of ministers, teachers, parents, and men in general; the great majority of laborers in the Master's vineyard are wasting time and effort in trying to do two impossible things—making corrupt trees bring forth good fruit and turning bad trees into good ones by first making them bear good fruit. Wise to win souls is the man who sees as Luther did, that good works do not make a man good, nor bad ones make him bad, and who consequently feels the absolute necessity of first committing every tree into the hands of the Lord of the vineyard to be transformed by the power of his might, regarding it as his great and chief business not to counsel men to attempt the impossible task of making themselves better by their own works, but to point them and urge them to the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world.

Another saying of Luther's condemned by Bellarmine is this: "Where there is faith no sin can hurt." This same passage is quoted more fully for censure by Prof. Mœhler, and at still greater length by Nampon. Ward, an English writer, also harps on this same string. The passage is taken from Luther's treatise on the Babylonish Captivity, and may be seen in the work already referred to, Wace's *Luther's Primary Works*, on page 185. The subject of which Luther is speaking is baptism, and his object is to persuade men when they have sinned to rely for forgiveness upon the promise of God made to them in their baptism, instead of depending upon any satisfactions they can perform themselves. His own words will best show his design as well as his meaning. "The first thing we have to notice in baptism is the divine promise which says, he who believes and is baptized shall be saved. This promise is to be infinitely preferred to the whole display of works, vows, religious orders, and whatsoever has been introduced by the invention of man. On this promise depends

our whole salvation, and we must take heed to exercise faith in it, not doubting at all that we are saved, since we have been baptized. Unless this faith exists and is applied, baptism profits us nothing; nay, it is hurtful to us, not only at the time when it is received, but in the whole course of our after life. For unbelief of this kind charges the divine promise with falsehood, and to do this is the greatest of all sins." This promise, he goes on to say, ought to be studiously inculcated by preaching, because having been once conferred upon us its truth continues to the hour of death; the penitent's heart will be comforted and encouraged to hope for mercy if he fixes his eyes upon that divine promise once made to him, which could not lie, and which still continues entire, unchanged and unchangeable by any sins of his. And then, after illustrating his point by the case of the children of Israel, who when they returned to God in repentance first of all called to mind their deliverance from Egypt, he utters the sentiment censured by our opponents: "We see then how rich a Christian or baptized man is, since, even if he would, he cannot lose his salvation by any sins however great, unless he refuses to believe, for no sins whatever can condemn him, but unbelief alone. All other sins, if faith in the divine promise made to the baptized man stands firm or is restored, are swallowed up in a moment through that same faith, yea, through the truth of God, because he cannot deny himself if thou confess him and believingly cleave to his promise. Whereas contrition, confession and satisfaction for sins, and every effort that can be devised by men, will desert thee at thy need and make thee more miserable than ever, if thou forgettest this divine truth and puffest thyself up with such things as these. For whatever work is wrought apart from faith in the truth of God is vanity and vexation of spirit." The case that Luther has under consideration is that of a believer or baptized person who has fallen into grievous sin since his baptism. How shall such an one obtain pardon and get back again the lost grace and the lost right to heaven? By the sacrament of penance, says the Church. The virtue of your baptism has come to an end by the sin you have committed; the ship of baptism is wrecked. Henceforth your only hope is in the plank of penance; which the Church throws out to keep you from perishing. Or, in other words, it has set up a tribunal on earth to dispose of the cases of persons sinning after baptism. The priest, as the appointed vicar of Christ,

has full authority to try such cases, pronounce judgment, and determine the penalty. Before this tribunal of the Church every man who has sinned after baptism must appear, exercise contrition, confess his sins, and perform the satisfaction imposed on him by his confessor. Otherwise there is no salvation. Now what Luther teaches in the passage objected to is diametrically opposed to all this, and entirely subversive of this priestly court. When the Church says to the penitent seeking pardon, Do penance, Luther bids him exercise faith in the divine promise given him in his baptism. When the Church answers that the virtue of baptism has ceased, Luther declares it continues till the hour of death. When the Church further argues that one mortal sin is sufficient to annul the grace and salvation secured in baptism, Luther then insists on it that "a baptized person cannot, even if he would, lose his salvation by any sins however great, unless he refuses to believe, for no sins whatever can condemn him, but unbelief alone. All other sins, if faith in the divine promise stands firm or is restored, are swallowed up in a moment through that same faith; yea through the truth of God, because he cannot deny himself, if thou confess him and believingly cleave to his promise." In short, Luther here teaches that sins after baptism are remitted in the same manner as those committed before—through faith in the promise of God in Christ; that the old ship has not been dashed to pieces as was supposed, but still sails safely on its course, and need not be exchanged for one of the fragments into which it has been broken. Thus summarily does Luther turn this whole sacerdotal court out of doors by his doctrine concerning baptism, and it is not to be wondered at that the view set forth and advocated by him should fail to find favor in the eyes of those whose jurisdiction is thus overthrown.

The third passage of Luther's that has often been employed to prove him guilty of favoring immorality by direct teaching, is that in which he seems to counsel and urge the commission of sin on the ground that however often and however greatly we may sin we yet shall not be separated thereby from the love of Christ; yea, even though a thousand fornications and murders were committed in a single day. This certainly seems to deserve the severe condemnation which it has so often received; yet as in the case of the other passages, it admits of very satisfactory explanation. The expression is taken from a letter written by Luther to Melanchthon, a circum-

stance which at once puts the whole matter into a more favorable light. According to Hare, who bases his views upon Bauer's reply to Mœhler, Luther in the letter referred to discusses the question whether the reception of the communion in one kind only is sinful. He expresses his gratification that at Wittenberg it is celebrated in both kinds, as instituted by Christ. Then he goes on to speak of fearful calamities which appear to him to be hanging over Germany. Immediately after this occurs the passage that has given so much offence, in which Melanchthon is apparently urged to commit the most abominable crimes and with the utmost possible frequency, inasmuch as through the riches of God's grace they will all be forgiven. When it is borne in mind that, just before, Luther had expressed his apprehensions in regard to calamities that threatened his native land, we cannot suppose that, "unless some evil spirit had actually taken possession of him, he could just then have cried out to Melanchthon, Come, brother, let us sin, let us wallow in sin, so that our enemies may indeed have good reason to exult and triumph over us, and that all lovers of godliness may be offended." The following paraphrase by Mr. Hare, we believe, sets forth the true meaning of this notorious passage, and we will therefore give it in his own words: "When we look back to the previous argument about the eucharist, it seems evident that Melanchthon must have been insisting on the sinfulness of receiving in one kind. This, Luther speaks of as a *fictum peccatum*, and says: You who are a preacher of grace, remember that the grace you are to preach of is not a make-believe but a mighty reality, and that it is not bestowed on us for the forgiveness of artificial peccadilloes, but of those awful, cleaving sins of which every man with an awakened conscience must acknowledge himself guilty. God sent his Son into the world to save real sinners—not fictitious sinners. Therefore be a sinner, and sin boldly. Acknowledge that thou art a sinner, but be of a good heart notwithstanding. Do not torment thyself about peccadilloes; let not the consciousness of thy sins drive thee to despair; believe in Christ and rejoice in him who is the conqueror of sin, of death and of the world; and let this faith prevail over the consciousness of thy sins. We needs must sin as long as we are in our present state. This life is not the habitation of righteousness, but we look, St. Peter tells us, for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is enough that through the riches of the glory of

God we have known the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world. From him sin shall not separate us, even though we committed fornication and murder a thousand times; yea a thousand times in a single day." Whether this explanation of Mr. Hare's be satisfactory to all or not, one thing is certain from the very force of the passage, and that is, that Luther does not mean to exhort any one to the commission of these crimes; and not any the less sure is it that he does not mean to say that a believer can be guilty of these enormous sins and yet not be deprived of the fellowship of Christ. He undoubtedly aims to magnify the grace of God to the utmost possible extent. Having unlimited confidence in its efficacy, he assures us that nothing can be too hard for it. No matter how aggravated the sin, the grace of God can forgive and wash it away. And then, supposing an extreme case, he declares that though one should be guilty of fornication and murder a thousand times in a single day, even such a sinner could be washed, sanctified and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. There is in this whole passage nothing whatever to alarm the friends of morality; it is the effort of a great soul struggling after language to express the exalted conception it has formed of the Gospel of Christ; it is only Luther's way of saying, where sin aboundeth grace doth much more abound.

One other expression demands examination under the head of favoring immorality by direct teaching: it is the one asserting the necessity of good works to salvation. As shown in the former part of this lecture, our Church was not willing to sanction the use of this formula, and for its rejection has received censure, as if opposed to that which is right and good. The unwillingness to tolerate this famous proposition, we believe, can be accounted for without being obliged to acknowledge that it indicates hostility to good works themselves. Let the object of their opposition be clearly distinguished. It is not good works that they objected to. On the contrary they insist on it that these are necessary and should be done; necessary for various reasons, but not for salvation, in the sense in which the phrase was invariably understood in those days. The opposite proposition, that good works are pernicious to salvation, they reject with the utmost promptness and emphasis, "because thereby discipline and decency are impaired, and a barbarous, savage, secure, Epicurean life is introduced and strengthened."



They give as a reason for not approving the expression under consideration: "That it is not in accord with the form of sound doctrine and with the word, and has been always and still is set over against our Christian faith by the Papists, in which we confess that faith alone justifies and saves."

Bishop Davenant makes the following sensible remarks upon this point: "In contending with the Romanists about justification it is not wise or safe to use or admit these propositions—that good works are necessary to salvation." And he assigns as a reason that, when they are nakedly propounded, the Papists always understand by them that works are necessary as being from their real and intrinsic worthiness meritorious causes of man's salvation, which is most false." He then goes on to point out various senses that may be given to this proposition that are not true, and on this account the formula in its unqualified form is to be rejected. The long and short of the matter is, that this proposition is susceptible of an interpretation and an application that are erroneous and misleading. There are conditions and states of mind in religious experience in which the counsel involved in our formula would be unwise, impracticable, and calculated to lead to despondency and despair. Our Reformers were Augustinian, and not Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian, in their conceptions of the state of mankind since the fall. They did not merely regard man as stubborn and unwilling to do what he ought, but they also considered him as sick and helpless. They accordingly felt that what a man, unable to raise an arm for very weakness, needed, was not commands and incentives to quit his bed and go about and attempt the work of one in perfect health, but encouragement and admonition most urgent to commit himself at once, before doing another thing, into the hands of the good Physician who came to heal them that are sick. Persuaded of the folly and misery of dealing with a condemned and helpless sinner as you would with a righteous holy being, they could not tolerate any utterance or teachings that put the halt, the blind, the sick and impotent to work to heal themselves by doing good work, and as this expression was always interpreted to mean that a sinner must save himself by his own working, they rightly and to the comfort of many troubled hearts rejected the proposition—not because they were opposed to good works, but to the consummate folly of setting a multitude of impotent folk to work to cure their impotency by

vigorous exercise and labor, or as Luther has tersely put it, in his *Christian Liberty*: "It is not from works that we are set free by the faith of Christ, but from the belief in works."

In concluding this portion of our subject let us call to mind the several facts that have now come into our possession: The Reformers expressed themselves with the utmost fullness and freeness upon the various subjects of religion, and what they spoke or wrote was proclaimed to the ends of the earth; out of all their numerous sayings and writings only a very small number of passages have ever been objected to on the ground of their discouraging virtue and promoting vice; these passages thus censured and condemned have been found not only to admit of a satisfactory explanation, but of such interpretation as to be made to teach most precious and important truth. Now when all these circumstances are considered, does it not seem miraculous that these men should not have offended more frequently and more decidedly, and do we not in this fact alone have proof conclusive that they knew from inner consciousness whereof they affirmed, and that they spake as they were taught and moved of the Holy Ghost?

III. We have now disposed of two of the arguments commonly relied on to prove that the Protestant faith prohibits good works, that based upon the lives of Protestants, and that drawn from the professed teachings of several of the leading Reformers.

The third and only one yet remaining to be examined is that based upon the natural tendency of the doctrine of a free justification, which tendency it is claimed is unavoidably antinomian. Men, it is urged, will have no motive to obey the precepts of God's word, when they are assured that without the deeds of the law they shall be justified and saved by faith alone.

The chief reasons assigned for charging our doctrine of justification with antinomian tendencies are the two following: The prominent external motives that constrain men to avoid wrong-doing and follow after righteousness are the threatening of punishment and the promise of reward, and the force of these is taken away by belief in the theory of faith advocated by our churches. These external influences being removed, internal impulse alone must be depended on to produce the conduct required by God's word. This, in the case of the consistent Protestant believer, must all come from his faith, for that is the only internal quality made necessary to justifi-

cation ; and this faith, it is confidently maintained, has no moral power in it at all adequate to the production of a righteous course of conduct. Accordingly, there being no force within or without to constrain to a life of obedience, man, left to himself, will naturally walk after the lusts of his unrenewed heart and continue in the ways of sin.

Let us look at these reasons in the order above given. The first is that the force of the punishments threatened against disobedience and of the rewards promised to righteousness is annulled by the Protestant view of faith. The Protestant Christian is taught to believe that the moment he turns to God in faith he obtains remission of sins, acceptance with God, and a right to eternal life, not on account of anything he has done or can do himself, but solely on account of what Christ has done in his behalf. Thus from the first step toward the Father's house he may have hope and peace, instead of doubt and tormenting fear. The Catholic, on the other hand, is taught that he is not justified until, and in so far as, he is also sanctified. His justification, being based on his having been made inherently righteous, follows his sanctification, and as any man's obedience is always imperfect and doubtful, there is always more or less uncertainty as to his acceptance before God and his final salvation. This uncertainty, it is claimed, begets a wholesome fear, which acts as a continual restraint upon wrong doing and an incentive to righteousness, whilst the Protestant's more confident and more cheerful view of his relation to God and eternal life has the opposite effect, and renders him careless about his conduct. As Bishop Davenant says: "The Papists object that this doctrine of the assurance of faith, which we lay down, puts men at their ease, and that the effect is that men take occasion hence to give the reins more boldly to unholy lusts. Father Paul tells us that in the debates in the Council of Trent on the certainty of forgiveness and grace, it was maintained that uncertainty was profitable and meritorious besides ; that otherwise a "Christian would become drowsy, careless, and negligent to do good."

Now in considering this objection it must be distinctly borne in mind that it can apply to none but believers, for none others are freed from the fear in question by our teaching on the subject of justification. According to our doctrine, also, as well as that of our opponents, the fear of eternal condemnation can be brought to bear

upon the minds of impenitent men to bring them to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In further noticing the objection now before us we have the following considerations to present: That while disposed to admit that the threatening of punishment has a restraining effect upon wrongdoing under all circumstances, we nevertheless feel that the value of this motive to the cause of religion may very easily be overrated, and that when it is constantly present to the consciousness, or exists in a high degree, it actually hinders, and sometimes even paralyzes, activity, instead of promoting or producing it. Prof. Wace, in the Boyle Lectures for 1874-1875, in speaking of the doctrine of justification as favoring amendment of life, ascribes this result to the fact that the doctrine delivers men from fear and establishes confidence between the soul and God. He must have very different ideas as to the effects of fear on morality from the Tridentine theologians, who pronounced it both profitable and meritorious. This is what he says on the subject: "If I have at all succeeded in explaining the meaning of the doctrine (justification), it will not seem wonderful that it should have such an influence. Its very object, as we have seen, is to remove from the soul every fear, to banish those shadows of guilt which render it timorous in action and in thought, and to restore it to perfect confidence in a just and in an almighty God. This is the Protestantism which, in the mouth of Luther, gave a new life to the world. The proclamation of the Reformer was that it is the design of God to have dauntless, calm, and generous sons, in all eternity and perfection, who fear absolutely nothing, but by confidence in his grace triumph over and despise all things, and treat punishments and deaths as sport. The rest he hates as cowards, who are confounded by the fear of everything, even by the sound of a rustling leaf."

Again, the facts of religious experience, as far as they bear upon the question under discussion, do not favor the view that uncertainty as to our acceptance with God is conducive to piety; for these facts indicate very clearly and decidedly that the stronger a man's conviction is that he is in favor with God and is in possession of the gift of grace, the stronger is his desire for holiness and the greater and steadier his effort to attain it.

The inspired writers, in appealing to men to cultivate holiness, evidently do not apprehend any unfavorable results from the assur-

ance of faith. Thus the apostle exhorts the Corinthian Christians to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit because they have the promise that God would receive them and be a Father unto them. St. John uses the fact that we are sons of God now and shall be like him hereafter as a reason why every man should purify himself. St. Peter, having first reminded his readers that the divine power has given them all things belonging to life and godliness, assures them these exceeding great and precious promises are given that by them we might become partakers of the divine nature. Now all these appeals are addressed, not to the feeling of fear begotten by our uncertainty as to our relation to God, but to the feeling of confidence produced by the conviction that God is truly our Father and that we are his children indeed.

The objection against the doctrine we are seeking to defend bears equally hard upon the blessed Gospel of the Son of God, if the apostle Paul's representations as to its design are to be trusted. He declares in the epistle to the Hebrews that it was the purpose of Christ to destroy the devil who had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In his epistle to the Romans he says: Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. How well this accords with Luther's expression, quoted by Wace: "It is the design of God to have dauntless, calm, and generous sons, who fear absolutely nothing, but by confidence in his grace triumph over and despise all things and treat deaths and punishments as sport."

Lastly, the faith through which the fear in consideration is cast out, itself calls into play other influences, which, to say the least, are fully as efficacious in preventing the believer from acting contrary to the will of God, as the uncertainty which our opponents pronounce so wholesome in its effects. The restraints referred to are the following, and their operations are so well understood that the bare enumeration of them is sufficient to our purpose. The conviction that God is ever near us and sees all we do; the desire to enjoy the esteem and good will of one so exalted in character and power as God; the fear of displeasing God and thus bringing upon ourselves his paternal chastisement; the fear of being deprived of the Holy Spirit's presence and assistance; the dread of the sense of guilt, shame and misery that sin produces; the aversion to the very



nature of sin, and the doubt that any act of disobedience begets as to whether we are in the faith or not. These various motives to righteous conduct, which faith calls into activity, will more than compensate for the loss sustained through the casting out of that fear that hath torment, and remove all occasion for uneasiness as to any injury the cause of morality and religion may suffer by its expulsion. All things considered, the fact that our faith delivers men from this slavish spirit should be regarded, not as an argument against our view of justification, but as satisfactory evidence in favor of its truth and excellence.

But, interpose our opponents, not only is the motive of fear counteracted by your doctrine of justification, but that of hope also. What is there to stir up a man to do his best in the cultivation of spiritual graces, or to stimulate him to zealous exertion in the service of Christ, in the case of a person who believes himself accepted of God and entitled to eternal glory in consideration of what another has done in his behalf? Does not faith break off the connection between our efforts here and our destiny hereafter, and thus rather impede than help in completing Christian character and performing Christian works? The argument is that the believer has no incentive to exertion in the attainment of holiness and in the rendering of service, inasmuch as admittance into heaven is not made to depend upon these things, but upon the work and righteousness of Christ. The believer is supposed to say within himself, "Since by faith in Jesus I am in possession of a title to heaven, it matters not whether I am diligent in the culture of my inner life and in the performance of duty or otherwise; the result is all the same in either case—it is a penny a day, whatever the amount or character of the service rendered."

In examining this objection let us inquire whether it is a fact that, on the supposition that our right to heaven depends upon the work of Christ for us and not upon the merit of our own doings, a greater or less degree of fidelity and activity in the pursuit of moral excellence and the discharge of Christian obligation makes no difference in our future condition. We think it will turn out far otherwise. We feel assured that it can be made to appear from the word of God that the outward circumstances of the saved will differ very materially hereafter, even as they are known to do in the present life. The Scriptures furnish various representations that indicate

with much clearness that there are differences in external condition in heaven as well as upon earth. For instance, the apostle Paul in the 15th chapter of first Corinthians sets forth the great variety that exists in the objects of this world; all flesh is not the same flesh, but differs in the case of men, of beasts, of fishes, and of birds. So also there is a difference between celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial. The sun, moon and stars differ in glory; and again one star from another. Then he adds, "so also is the resurrection of the dead." The idea of the apostle seems to be that different kinds of nature take upon themselves different outward forms. The higher the nature the nobler the body assumed. And there is every reason to believe that what holds good in respect to the different kinds of nature is a law also in respect to different degrees of the same nature. The nobler the nature the nobler the external form in which it is clothed. Consequently the higher the degree of holiness—which is the sum of all moral excellence—the nobler and better the resurrection body. Superiority of inner life will express itself in superior external form. This is already of itself a difference in outward condition, for superior bodily excellence is an advantage by no means to be despised. But having reason to believe that hereafter there will be a perfect adjustment between the nature of all God's creatures and their external circumstances, we feel confident that superiority in outward condition may be inferred from superiority of character.

Still more decided and clear however is the evidence in support of this position furnished by the teachings of the Saviour in the parable of the pounds and of the talents. The parables in general reveal to us the unseen things of the kingdom of heaven by means of the known things of this world.

The Saviour, before whose eye both worlds lie equally open, tells us what he sees in the one by comparison with what we know in the other. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man going into a far country who delivered his goods into the hands of his servants, directing them to trade therewith till his return. After a long time he cometh again and reckoneth with them. Now let us see carefully on what principles he deals with them, for like him is the kingdom of heaven, or as this noblemen dealt with his servants, so will the Saviour deal with his likewise. In the parable in the 25th of St. Matthew, that of the talents, the following are the

facts given. One of the servants had received five talents; with these he traded, and made therewith other five talents. The percentage of gain is exactly one hundred. The reward is commendation for fidelity and the assurance that he shall be made ruler over many things. Another servant has received only two talents, gains therewith two talents more. The percentage of increase is one hundred, the same as in the case of the first servant. The reward is precisely the same as in the former instance, expressed in precisely the same words. The reason undoubtedly is that the diligence and fidelity were exactly the same in both servants.

Now in St. Luke, the 19th chapter, we have the parable of the pounds, very similar in many respects to that of the talents. Here all the servants are entrusted with a like amount—one pound. The first one reports a gain of ten pounds; the second of five, or only one-half as much on the same capital. As the sum traded with is the same, there must have been twice the activity and faithfulness in the case of the first servant as in that of the second. Will there be any difference in the reward? or will the declaration of the Saviour be precisely the same to the second as the first, as we found it to be in the parable by St. Matthew? Read the 17th and 19th verses, "Well, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." That is what he said to him that gained ten pounds. "Be thou also over five cities," is what he said to him that had gained five pounds. Here is no word of commendation; he is not called good servant; he is not pronounced faithful, for that would not have been true, as with precisely the same abilities and opportunities he ought to have accomplished as much as the first, with equal application. Now we for our part believe that the Saviour is not careless in the use of expressions, and that the distinctions perceived in his language were designed by him, and designed because he wanted to teach mankind that reward in his kingdom would correspond with the utmost nicety to the degree of faithfulness manifested in his service.

Nor is there, as is commonly supposed, in the parable of the laborers who wrought different lengths of time but received the same compensation, anything to conflict with the teaching of the two we have considered. That only teaches this additional principle that the motives of the laborers, and their opportunities, are taken into consideration in fixing the rate of compensation, and not merely the length of the service or the amount of work.

The following extract from Prof. Bruce's *Training of the Twelve* expresses the same truth, "The kingdom of glory will be but the kingdom of grace perfected, the regeneration begun here brought to its final and complete development. But the regeneration, in its imperfect state, is an attempt to organize men into a society based on the possession of spiritual life, all being included in the kingdom who are new creatures in Christ Jesus, and the highest place being assigned to those who have attained the highest stature as spiritual men. This idea has never been more than approximately realized. The visible church, the product of the attempt to realize it, is and ever has been a most disappointing embodiment, in outward visible shape, of the ideal city of God. Ambition, selfishness, worldly wisdom, courtly arts, have too often procured thrones for false apostles, who never forsook anything for Christ. Therefore we still look forward and upward with longing eyes for the true city of God, which shall as far exceed our loftiest conceptions as the visible church comes short of them. In that ideal commonwealth perfect moral order will prevail. Every man shall be in his true place there; no vile men shall be in high places, no noble souls shall be doomed to obstruction, obscurity, and neglect; but the noblest will be the highest and first, even though now they be the lowest and last. 'There shall be true glory, where no one shall be praised by mistake or in flattery; true honor, which shall be denied to no one worthy, granted to no one unworthy; nor shall any unworthy one ambitiously seek it, where none but the worthy are permitted to be.'" The last sentence Prof. Bruce quotes from Augustine.

The argument is undoubtedly supported also by reason and experience. That men should be rewarded according to their excellence and works, no unprejudiced mind will deny. That the qualities and actions of men have much to do in determining their outward circumstances in this world, is a matter of common observation. To a great extent every man makes his own surroundings, and similar causes will have like results always and everywhere.

But not only will there be differences in external condition, graduated according to the degree of moral character, but even under precisely the same outward circumstances the man that has made the greatest progress in holiness will enjoy the largest amount of satisfaction and of good.

Happiness is by no means proportioned to the means of happi-

ness which our circumstances afford us, but depends very much also upon our own state of mind, and our dispositions. There are feelings and affections that will make happiness impossible under any circumstances however favorable, and there are others again that will keep the mind in a state of peace and joyfulness under the hardest external condition. Happiness accordingly comes very largely from within, and not exclusively from without. On this subject Chalmers says most excellently and truly: "Virtue is not the price of heaven—it is the very substance and being of heaven. \* \* \* All who refuse a life of virtue, do in fact refuse the only heaven of eternity—the heaven of the New Testament; for search far and wide over all the domains of infinite space, and there is positively no other heaven to be found than a heaven of righteousness and true holiness. Were it only a musical heaven, we ask of what use and enjoyment it could be to the deaf? or were it only a heaven of beauty and splendor, a panorama of glorious spectacles over which the delighted eye might expatiate, of what use could the privilege of entry into such a heaven be to the blind? or were it only an intellectual heaven, how could it prove a heaven at all to those bereft of understanding? or finally, being what it is, a moral or spiritual heaven, it can be no heaven to the wicked, or the secular, or the earthly; and that it might be a heaven to us there must be an adaptation of the subjective to the objective, or in plainer language we must be sanctified, we must be moralized."

Again, our ability to derive profit and enjoyment from any opportunities the providence of God may afford us, depends also upon the degree of cultivation bestowed upon the various faculties through which we perceive and appreciate the excellencies of the objects around us. A man's ability to derive pleasure from the beautiful, the grand, the sublime in nature, depends upon his taste for these glories of the world in which we live; one will be unaffected by the scene that thrills the soul of another with delight. A man's ability to derive enjoyment from the noblest productions of literature depends altogether upon his ability to apprehend and appreciate the thoughts and feelings that are expressed therein. The book that one reader will thrust aside as dull and tedious, another will hang over with deepest interest and attention and lay aside with regret when finished. And thus it is with every means of rational enjoyment; he whose powers have been most highly disciplined by faith-



ful exercise thereof will, other things being equal, derive the highest degree of pleasure and profit from any circumstances calculated to furnish these.

From these considerations it appears that the cultivation of all our various faculties, moral and intellectual, constitutes an important element in every man's happiness; and that the measure of cultivation of mind and heart becomes the measure of enjoyment and advantage that our external surroundings will yield. Now it can readily be shown that both character and mental culture are the product of our own actions while in a state of discipline here on earth; and that thus we ourselves create the constituent elements that enter into our happiness, here and hereafter.

And, first, moral character is the outgrowth of our daily conduct. Any desire, whether good or evil, that arises in the soul, impels to action corresponding in character to that of the desire itself. If the desire, by the consent of the will, passes over into an outward act, it gains strength by the gratification afforded. The act being continuously repeated, the desire becomes established as a habit or permanent disposition of the mind, and this is character. Now in the school of life it has been so ordered that demands are made almost hourly upon the virtuous feelings, as self-control, self denial, forbearance, benevolence, zeal for God, and many other Christian affections. According as we respond to these demands, gaining victories over evil dispositions and indolence, so we advance in moral character, and that, as before shown, is an important and essential element in happiness, whether on earth or in heaven.

So also it is in respect to the improvement of all our mental powers; every pursuit in life calls them into play, and the man that is most careful and faithful to put his whole soul into his work will acquire the highest degree of discipline. Faithful performance of any work, whatever, will involve the best use of all the intellectual faculties we possess, and such use will always bring with it increased power of the kind that was called into activity. The man, consequently, who employs his gifts most faithfully on all occasions that require their exercise, is the man in whom these will become most fully developed, and superior development always enables him to derive greater satisfaction and benefit from any circumstances in which he may be placed. He that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly.

Summing up our argument, then, we find that in the future life our external condition will be pleasant and profitable in a higher or lower degree in proportion as we have attained to a higher or lower degree of excellence of character, and have manifested greater or less zeal and fidelity in the service of God; likewise, that even out of the same circumstances we shall be able to derive more or less of enjoyment and advantage according as our moral and intellectual faculties have been more or less improved by cultivation; and lastly that the degree of moral and intellectual development we attain depends upon the manner in which we discharge the duties of every-day life, and the use we make of the opportunities for self-discipline with which God continually surrounds us. In short, happiness corresponds with character, and character is the product of fidelity in respect to opportunity and duty. Thus, after all, even on the admission that our works do not purchase a right to heaven, it turns out that our reward hereafter varies according to the deeds done in the body, and that the Protestant Christian is not deprived of the stimulus to duty which comes from the hope of eternal recompense. We conclude this part of our subject with another most excellent extract from Dr. Chalmers: "Now our safety, our state of salvation, or which is the same thing, our state of spiritual health, and so of spiritual enjoyment, lies in a state of earnest, progressive, aspiring holiness, along a career in which the greater our holiness the greater will be our happiness also; or in other words the more virtuous here the greater will be our preferment there—the more we multiply and heighten our graces on this side of death, the greater will be our moral and spiritual treasures through all eternity. Thus ought we to understand the precepts of laying up our treasures in heaven; and the virtues of the new creature, instead of being the price which we give in exchange for these treasures, or only the evidence of their being in reserve for us by the time that we enter into Paradise, are the very treasures themselves which regale and satisfy the spirits of the celestials. Holiness is more than the way to some better and higher landing-place; holiness is itself the landing-place, and our restoration to holiness the great object of the economy under which we sit. Christianity does not begin with virtue and end with justification—it begins with justification and ends with virtue."

Again, it is argued, that not only are the threatenings and promises of God's word made ineffective by our doctrine of justification,

but that all moral elements having been carefully excluded therefrom, there remains in it no moral force that is at all adequate to the production of obedience and holiness. The connection between justification and sanctification, it is claimed, cannot be vindicated.

From the elements that constitute justification the Protestant view shuts out sanctification, retaining forgiveness of sin, restoration to God's favor, adoption into his family and heirship in the kingdom of heaven. These our opponents regard as external things, not necessarily involving any moral change in the justified. Thus, in their opinion, the only element that involves a change of character is carefully eliminated from our doctrine. And not only this, but we do not admit any moral quality, they say, into the condition by which a sinner becomes justified. The condition is a single thing—faith; and that faith justifies, not as Bishop Bull holds, because it is a complex quality including all the works of Christian piety, but because it is the instrument by which the righteousness of Christ is embraced. Thus, the Apology admits "that faith is efficacious not on account of its worthiness but because of the divine promises." The Formula of Concord declares, "that faith, in the case of justification before God, relies neither on contrition, nor on love, nor on other virtues, but on Christ alone. For faith justifies, not because it is a work of great value and an eminent virtue, but because it apprehends and receives the merit of Christ in the promise of the Gospel." Thus it seems we are obliged to look to faith alone not only to justify us but also to sanctify us and to take our stand with Luther when he says, "Justifying faith is trust, comes first, justifies by itself, and then gives birth to all graces." Faith is the one thing of all the parts of justification that is within us, and thus becomes the only point of attachment for all the Christian virtues and the Christian works that the word of God requires. Will the existence of justifying faith insure the various effects involved in sanctification?

Let us, in seeking to answer this question, distinctly bear in mind that the object that must be secured is sanctification, or the production of holiness and obedience to the divine will, and this must somehow be the fruit of faith. Now, holiness is not a mere logical process, but, in the words of Prof. Wace, "something created and developed in us by the influence of a personal Spirit on our souls." According to the Scriptures it is Christ that has undertaken to save his people from their sins; that gave himself for the church that he

might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to himself at last as a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. This purification Christ brings about by the agency of the Holy Spirit, for, as Dr. Newman well says: "Since his ascension Christ has ceased to act by his own hand, but sends his Spirit to take his place, he himself coming again by his Spirit. This is evidently the truth taught by the Saviour himself in John xiv. 16-18."

The Holy Spirit, bestowed by Christ, takes up his abode permanently in the soul of the believer, brings him under the influence of the truth, and works in him that love which is the fulfilling of the law. We need not stop to show that these agencies and means, expressly appointed for this purpose, will prove adequate to the production of holiness and obedience. Proof of this will be furnished in the further discussion of this subject; besides, the efficiency of the instrumentalities is generally admitted. The point to be established here is that faith brings us into connection with them—unites us to Christ, secures the gift of the Holy Spirit, subjects us to the power of truth, and begets in us that love to God and to man on which hang all the law and the prophets. If faith can accomplish this connection, then our question is decided in the affirmative, and the fact is established that the faith which justifies also sanctifies, and the charge that it prohibits good works must be withdrawn.

And, first, will faith bring us into union with Christ so as to secure his active co-operation in the work of delivering our souls from the dominion of sin? The union contemplated will require the consent of both parties concerned—that of Christ, who is to save, and that of the penitent, who is to be saved; and the moment both are willing the union is consummated, and the work of deliverance from sin is begun. Just as the physician and the patient have come together, when the former has agreed to undertake the sick man's cure, and the latter has concluded to submit himself into the physician's hands for treatment, so Christ and the lost sinner have come together when Christ consents to undertake the sinner's salvation from sin, and the sinner himself has decided to surrender himself to Christ to be healed of all his spiritual diseases.

As far as Christ is concerned, he is ever ready and willing to perform his part in the work. He gave himself for the church, to sanctify and cleanse it, and he will not be remiss in the office he has taken upon himself. He came to seek and to save that which is lost;



he went about doing good. And he has expressly and emphatically declared, "him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Christ, as shown, being always willing to accept men for salvation, it only remains for the sinner to consent to commit himself into Christ's hands in order to complete the union, and to bring into action the various agencies and appliances appointed for man's deliverance from sin and his restoration to holiness. This is clearly the teaching of Christ himself in various declarations that fell from his own lips. "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not." And to the Jews he said on another occasion with the utmost plainness, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Both these passages teach that if men had been willing, their salvation would have been assured. This fact simplifies the question to be answered and reduces it to this form: Will faith, wherever it exists, secure the believer's consent to submit himself into the hands of Christ for spiritual treatment? The physician stands ready. Will the sick man accept him? Will faith make him willing to submit himself into his hands?

To answer this question let us determine what conditions of mind are necessary to induce this willingness and self-surrender. We say there must be in the first place a sincere desire for the salvation that Christ has to bestow—a desire for the pardon of sin and restoration to the friendship of God—a desire also for deliverance from sin and restoration to holiness. Unless a man is sincerely concerned to secure the blessings which Christ came to impart, he certainly will not take the trouble of going in pursuit of them. Again, this desire must be sufficiently strong to make a man willing to accept the blessings wished for in any way and on any conditions according to which it may please Christ to communicate them. Many a young man appreciates the advantage which a full course at college secures, and would like to possess them, but unfortunately he does not desire them sufficiently to subject himself to the laborious and self-denying process involved in such a course. Before his desire will lead to any practical results it must rise to a height in which it will accept the course notwithstanding the hard work and the self-denial that belong to it. So in respect to the vastly greater blessings of holiness, one must desire them to such a degree as to be willing to submit to the entire discipline Christ in his wisdom



may see fit to ordain. This, as any one can see, implies a complete surrender of one's self into the hands of the Saviour, and involves an act of the will.

To this desire another element, however, must be united in order to produce this willingness; and that element is trust in Christ. At his hands we are to receive the unspeakable gift of salvation. But we are sinners, under sentence of condemnation; and can we in such a case look for favors at the hands of Christ? It is evident that before we can come to him for the gift of his Holy Spirit to accomplish our sanctification, we must trust in his mercy and believe in his willingness to forgive us our sins. So likewise trust is necessary to induce us to make the complete self-surrender required to our salvation. No man will unqualifiedly subject himself to the control of another unless he has unlimited confidence in his wisdom and good will. Nor will any man agree in all things to follow the directions and submit to the requirements of Christ unless he is persuaded that Christ is more competent to direct him than he is himself, and that Christ is truly his friend, and aims at his advantage in all that he ordains. From this examination we find that in order to beget the willingness which will lead a man to submit himself into the hands of Christ for sanctification, there must be an honest and unqualified desire for the blessing he has to bestow, and at the same time full confidence in his wisdom and goodness.

Now, does faith include in itself these two elements—of desire and trust? Does it include desire? Faith presupposes contrition in respect to sin; never exists unless contrition has previously existed. And contrition unquestionably constitutes desire for reconciliation with God, as also for freedom from the power of sin. In the opinion of our Confessional teachings, contrition and faith are the two parts of repentance, using the word repentance in its larger sense. Faith, therefore, necessarily presupposes contrition, that being the first part of repentance. Luther says, "Faith is inseparable from contrition." The Apology declares, "Faith dwells in those who are truly penitent, whose alarmed consciences feel the wrath of God and their own sins." The Formula of Concord says, "A true and saving faith, therefore, does not dwell in those who entertain no contrition and sorrow, and who have the evil design to remain in sin and to persevere in it." Accordingly in every case in which faith is known to exist, in every such case we are assured that contrition

has preceded. Now this contrition which always accompanies faith is described as including acknowledgment of sin, sorrow for sin and abstinence therefrom; and a state of mind like this, as all who have experienced it can testify, certainly contains an earnest and honest desire for deliverance from sin, or as the Apology expresses it: "Such a heart or conscience that has fully felt its wretchedness and sins and is truly alarmed, will not relish or seek the lusts of the world." Where there is anything like a true realization of the evil of sin, its degradation, its guilt, its ruinous tendency, and where, in addition, there is a sense of personal sinfulness, depravity and peril, there will arise a strong desire for deliverance from the punishment and from the power of sin. The contrition presupposed by faith accordingly supplies the element of desire needful to move the mind in search of a deliverer.

But, faith also includes in itself the trust that will result in the believer committing himself into the hands of Christ for salvation. The anxiety awakened in the contrite spirit gives the mind no rest; it is in misery and must have deliverance. This feeling of wretchedness will impel to unceasing efforts after peace and joy. Trust in Jesus will turn these efforts in the direction of Christ, and eventuate in the sinner's committing himself into the hands of Christ. For, according to the Lutheran view of faith, it is not a mere knowledge of the things to be believed concerning Christ; nor mere approving assent to the truthfulness of scripture declarations concerning him; but it is confidence in Christ—an act of the will's resting in him and embracing him as our present good and as the cause of the forgiveness of sins and of eternal life. That faith will thus result in the entrusting of the soul of the believer into the care of Jesus, will appear from a consideration of the circumstances of the case. Faith involves desire to be freed from the misery sin has occasioned; it is accompanied also by a feeling of our own inability to deliver ourselves, and constrains us to look for help from without; in casting about for a deliverer it perceives in Christ the helper it needs—one who can and will save. Now we maintain that the combined effect of this longing for relief from present wretchedness, this conviction that we cannot rescue ourselves by anything we may attempt, and the persuasion that Christ both is able and willing to deliver us, will lead such a soul to surrender itself to the friend of sinners for salvation in whatever way and by whatever discipline his love and wisdom

may conclude to employ. And when this self-surrender has once taken place, then the union between Christ and the penitent is an accomplished fact.

Our faith, whose effects we are seeking to ascertain, in so far as we have now traced its operations, has been instrumental in inducing the sinner to commit himself into the hands of Jesus, and has thus brought about a union between himself and one that is mighty to save. In the act of sinking, all hope in self utterly gone, he surrendered himself to Christ and cried, Lord, save me. Immediately, as in Peter's case, Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him. There is where we want him. With the hand of Jesus on him we know he is safe, and that ere long there will come to us a joyful shout: "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all mine iniquities; who healeth all my diseases; and redeemeth my life from destruction."

Now when an individual, desirous of salvation, and convinced of the uselessness of undertaking the work himself, has entrusted himself into the hands of Jesus by faith, then the Holy Spirit is given him to abide with him continually, to enlighten his mind through a knowledge of the truth, and to incline his heart to do the things that are agreeable to the will of God. Thus in consequence of our faith in Jesus we obtain the gift of the Holy Ghost to the end that we may be sanctified. Accordingly we are taught in the Apology to the Augsburg Confession that "we cannot receive the Holy Spirit except through faith. \* \* \* The veil which covers the face of Moses cannot be removed except by faith in Christ the Lord, through whom the Holy Spirit is imparted." Our Article also declares that the Holy Spirit is received by faith. This is also the teaching of Scripture: John vii. 38-39; Acts ii. 38; x. 43-45; xi. 15-17; xv. 8-9; xix. 2, and Galatians iii. 2-5 and 14. From these Scripture declarations it is clear that after attaining to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the believer in consequence of his faith receives the permanent gift of the Holy Spirit. But it is not on account of a direct faith in the Holy Ghost that the Spirit is communicated, but because we have been justified through our faith in Christ; the gift of the Spirit is the purchase of Christ's atonement, and is imparted permanently only to them who are reconciled to God through faith in the Lord Jesus. Meyer on Gal. iii. 14, pronounces the reception of the Spirit as the consequence of justification and an aim of Christ's

redeeming death—faith thus becoming the apprehending cause both of justification and the reception of the Spirit. Dr. Eadie, speaking on the same passage, says: “The reception of the spirit implies justification, and is a blessing either dependent on it or collateral with it.” Or, in other words, the habitual presence of the Holy Spirit is not to be enjoyed by any one who is not in right relationship to the Father through Christ. The gift of the Holy Spirit in its permanent form is in reality an indwelling of a divine being in the human soul, and this can take place only after reconciliation with God through the acceptance of Christ. That the Spirit comes to us not directly, but through the mediation of Christ, is evident from numerous and plain passages of God’s word. Matt. iii. 11; John vii. 39; xiv. 16, 26; xvi. 7; xiv. 18. The last passage very clearly implies that in some mysterious way the coming of the Spirit is also the coming of the Saviour—that the Lord Jesus comes again to his disciples by and through his Spirit. All these passages in the most emphatic manner make the bestowment of the Spirit dependent upon the work and will of Jesus, and from previous passages we learn that it is the will of Christ to give the Holy Spirit to them that are justified through faith in his name.

It is also the constant teaching of our Confessions that we become partakers of the Holy Ghost by means of faith. Now then, having connected the reception of the Holy Spirit with faith in Jesus, can it be made to appear that from this abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in one who is in the state of mind denoted by faith, obedience and holiness will invariably ensue? We feel that we can make our minds easy as to the sanctification of the man that has become a temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. If faith in Jesus secures the inhabitation of the spirit of Christ, we run no risk in predicting that faith will sanctify.

Says Bishop O’Brien in his work on Faith: “The Bible is express in referring the sanctification which it promises to those whom God justifies, to the direct exercise of the power of his everlasting Spirit continued to the very end of their mortal career, distinctly ascribing every advance in holiness which believers make, every act of obedience that they perform, every Christian grace that they acquire, all holy counsels by which they are directed, all good works that they bring forth, all to the continued exercise of the same power by which it has been first given to them to believe in the Redeemer.”



From Luther on Gal. ii. 18, we quote the following: "Now after that a man is once justified and possesseth Christ by faith, and knoweth that he is his righteousness and life, doubtless he will not be idle, but as a good tree he will bring forth good fruits. For the believing man hath the Holy Ghost, and where the Holy Ghost dwelleth he will not suffer a man to be idle, but stirreth him up to all exercises of piety and godliness, and of true religion to the love of God, to the patient suffering of afflictions, to prayer, to the exercise of charity towards all men." Says our Article: "Faith alone constantly secures grace and forgiveness of sins. And because the Holy Spirit is given through faith the heart becomes qualified to perform good works. For before this, while it is without the Holy Spirit it is too weak," etc., etc. The Smalcald Articles declare "That Paul in Rom. vii. 14-25 shows that he wars with the law in his members, etc., and this not by his own powers, but by the gift of the Holy Ghost that follows the remission of sins. This gift daily cleanses and purges the remaining sins, and works so as to render man pure. \* \* \* For the Holy Ghost does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so as to be completed, but represses and restrains it so that it must not do what it wishes." The testimony of Scripture is to the same effect. "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth," Eph. v. 9. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22; Acts xv. 8-9; 1 Pet. i. 22.

From the foregoing examination we find it to be the teaching of our church, grounded on the testimony of God's infallible word, that the faith to which we ascribe justification brings about a union between Christ and the believer, by begetting in the latter a state of mind disposing him to commit himself unqualifiedly into the hands of Jesus for deliverance from his spiritual diseases, and that in consequence of this union, resulting from justification by faith, the habitual presence and operation of the Holy Spirit is secured to the Christian, the result of which indwelling must necessarily be his deliverance from sin and his complete restoration to holiness. The personal influence of Christ exerted upon the believer by means of the Holy Spirit is sufficient cause to account for sanctification in the case of all who believe.

But this view of faith, which unites to Christ, secures pardon and



reconciliation, and sends the individual forth anew on his course with the gift of the Holy Ghost in his heart, involving as it does an exercise of the affections and an action of the will, and accounting so satisfactorily for all the internal changes necessary to sanctification, is of course stoutly combated by all who are opposed to our doctrine of justification. They regard faith as an act of the understanding only—a mere intellectual assent to the truths revealed in the Scriptures, having no moral side and no sanctifying power until made perfect or effective by the addition of charity. Thus the Apology complains, "Our adversaries think that faith consists in a knowledge of, or an acquaintance with, the history of Christ, hence they teach that we can believe even when sunk in mortal sin." Luther declares, "Moreover these perverters of the Gospel of Christ do teach that even that faith which they call faith infused, that is faith not received by hearing or gotten by working, but created in man by the Holy Ghost, may consist with deadly sin, and that the worst men may have this faith; therefore they say if it be alone (not informed by charity), it is idle and utterly unprofitable." Davenant says, "That misshapen faith which the Papists denominate orthodox, Christian and justifying, is found to be in most cases idle and buried in sleep. Bellarmine, while vehemently contending that justifying faith is nothing else than an assent to what is contained in the word, at the same time confesses, yea, contends, that this justifying faith consists with the fact of those endowed with such a faith remaining wicked." Of course if this be the correct view of faith, then there is in faith itself no sanctifying power, and wicked men and devils may possess it. As the practical effects of faith will be entirely different if our opponents' definition of faith be adopted, we must be sure, in order that our argument may be valid, that all we have claimed for faith is actually in it. That there is in faith in Jesus something more than mere belief in the truthfulness of scripture testimony, is the opinion of Protestant writers generally. Those who are not willing to admit that trust is an element of faith, yet insist on it that it is an invariable, inseparable consequent thereof—that where there is sincere and genuine faith there a "trustful reception of Christ, though not one of faith's essential elements, is certainly one of its immediate and unfailing results; that therefore a trustful reception of Christ as he is offered in the Gospel is essential to the nature, or at all events, inseparable from the acting or exer-

cise of faith in Christ." The practical effect is the same, whether trust or confidence be regarded as is most generally done, as a component part, or as an inseparable concomitant of faith. Virtually, therefore, Protestant writers are of one mind in regard to the nature of faith. But let us hear the testimony of various writers on this subject. And first that of Luther himself, in that celebrated description of faith which has elicited praise from such a sturdy opponent as Mœhler. "Faith," says he, "is a divine work in us which changes us and regenerates us of God, and mortifies the old Adam, making us quite different persons in heart, mind, disposition and in all our faculties, and bringing with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, this faith is a living, active, efficacious, powerful principle; it must incessantly perform that which is good. It never asks whether good works are to be performed, but before the inquiry is made, it has done them, and it is always in action. \* \* \* Hence men without constraint become willing and desirous to do good unto all, to serve all and to endure all things to the honor and praise of God who manifested this grace to him; so that it is impossible to separate works from faith, yea, as impossible as it is to separate heat and light from fire."

Schmid, in his *Dogmatics*, gives knowledge, assent, and confidence as the essential elements of faith. Confidence he defines as "an act by which the will rests in Christ, the Mediator, as our present good and the cause of another good, namely the remission of sins and the attainment of eternal life." This confidence the author claims is to be regarded as the most essential element of faith, the element that embraces and appropriates salvation. This statement as to the nature of faith the author supports by the declarations of various eminent theologians, who all speak of confidence as an act of the will, desiring and seeking mercy, embracing and receiving Christ. The writers referred to are Chemnitz, Quenstedt, Hollazius and Baier. Meyer on Rom. i. 5, says: "Faith is, according to Paul, the conviction and confidence (*Assensus* and *Fiducia*) regarding Jesus Christ as the only perfect mediator of the divine grace and of eternal life, through his work of atonement. Faith alone is the apprehending cause of the salvation promised and obtained through Christ; but because it transfers us into living and devoted fellowship with him, altogether of a moral character, it becomes the subjective moral power of the new life regenerated through the power of the Holy Spirit, of the life in Christ, which, however, is the necessary consequence, and never the ground of justification."

Davenant says: "Faith which Scripture acknowledges to be justifying has in itself the complicated act of the will and the intellect. For to apprehend Christ to be the Redeemer of the world and to assent to this proposition, 'Whosoever believeth shall be saved,' truly appertains to the intellect; but this faith, though at once beholding and acknowledging the Redeemer, does not justify, before the sinner has drawn, as it were, Christ to his own home and joined himself to the Mediator; and this does not happen unless by that act of confidence which, we assert, belongs also to the will." Similar views may be cited from Owen, who speaks of faith as a trusting in Christ—receiving Christ—committing ourselves to Christ, a proper reception of Christ and his salvation, and Julius Hare, who throughout holds and ably vindicates the Lutheran view of faith as including trust in Christ. Bishop O'Brien describes faith in the blood of Christ as faith in a remedy; faith in the Lord Jesus as similar to faith in a physician, in an advocate, or in a friend. Crawford says: "The fiducial trust and acquiescence of the heart is comprehended in faith, either as one of its constituent elements or as one of its proper fruits." Citations of like import from Chalmers, Prof. Wace, *Boyle Lectures*, Griffiths, *Divine Foot Prints*, and Melville, *Golden Lectures*, must be omitted for want of space. Prof. Hill in his "Divinity" says: "The Gospel bringing a remedy for the present state of moral evil, the mind is not disposed to accept of the remedy until a change upon the will and the affections be produced by the Spirit of God. Hence faith stands opposed to the love of sin which produces an aversion to the remedy; to that love of the world which produces an indifference about it; to that pride and self-confidence which make it appear unnecessary." Dr. Hodge says: "Faith is a complex act of the soul, involving the concurrence of the understanding and the will. Assent to a moral truth is a moral act; assent to a promise made to ourselves is an act of trust. \* \* \* The disposition to believe testimony or moral evidence, has its foundation in the will. Actual trust in a promise is an act of the will, and not a simple judgment as to its trustworthiness. \* \* \* The specific act of saving faith which unites to Christ and is the commencement, root and organ of our whole spiritual life, terminated upon Christ's person and work as Mediator, as presented in the offers and promises of the Gospel."

Dr. Valentine, in the Holman Lecture on "Justification," says:

"The essential thing, which itself constitutes the reality and fulness of faith, is trust or confidence. It is the "fiducia" of the old theologians, and expresses the act in which the penitent reposes in the merit and grace of the Redeemer. In it he accepts Christ who is a perfect Saviour and lays an appropriating hold on him, as he has been made unto him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. It brings the believing soul and Christ together. \* \* \* Faith must therefore be regarded as apprehending the gracious work and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Hence Luther's expression, Faith taketh hold of Christ and hath him present and holdeth him enclosed as the ring doth the precious stone," *Evan. Rev.*, Oct., 1869. Dr. Sprecher, in his *Groundwork of Lutheran Theology*, says: "Thus true faith involves both knowledge and feeling; it embraces an act of the intellect and a movement of the susceptibility. But it is also connected with an act of submission to God, which is manifestly an act of the will. Therefore, knowing, feeling, and willing operate together in faith. \* \* \* It has an object, and consequently it has a cognitive element; it approves that object, and consequently it has an emotional element; it assents to that object and surrenders itself to it, and consequently it must have a volitional and active element."

The testimony of the leading Protestant Confessions is in harmony with the view here advocated. Besides the emphatic declaration in our Article that the faith here spoken of is not the mere belief of a historical fact concerning Christ, which devils and the ungodly possess, the Apology says explicitly, "And that no one may suppose that it is mere knowledge, we will add further, it is to wish and to receive the offered promise of the remission of sins and of justification. \* \* \* Again, Faith is not only knowledge in the intellect, but also confidence in the will, that is, it is to wish and to receive that which is offered in the promise, namely reconciliation and remission of sins." It may be well to remark at this point that many of these declarations concerning the nature of faith as existing in the intellect and the will were made at a time when it was customary to regard the mind as divided into two parts only, viz., intellect and will—the affections and desires being regarded as parts of the latter. The Heidelberg Catechism (in its definition of faith) also adds the element of confidence to the knowledge whereby we hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word. The



Westminster Confession speaks of faith as a receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness. The principal acts of saving faith, according to it, are accepting, receiving and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life by the covenant of grace. The English Homilies define the faith spoken of in the Thirty-Nine Articles as follows: "True lively faith is not only the common belief of the articles of our faith, but it is a true trust and confidence in the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and a steadfast hope of all good things to be received at God's hands. \* \* \* It is not only to believe that Holy Scripture and all the articles of our faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence in God's merciful promises."

That trust in Christ is an essential element of the faith that saves, likewise has the clear support of God's word, as will become evident by considering the following scripture passages, in which the term faith occurs. In Matt. vi. 30, viii. 26, xiv. 31, and xv. 28, various individuals are reproved for the weakness of their faith, and others commended for the greatness of theirs, and by examination of the circumstances in each case it will be found that it is want of trust that is censured and the exhibition of it that is extolled.

In Luke xvi. 11; John ii. 24; 1 Thes. ii. 4; Gal. ii. 7; 1 Tim. i. 11; and 2 Tim. i. 12, the verb corresponding to the Greek noun for faith is used, and in all these cases Mr. Crawford claims that the word means "not merely the belief that a certain person is trustworthy, but the consequent reliance that is placed in him to the effect of consigning important interests to his care."

Various synonymous terms and figurative expressions are employed to denote believing in Jesus, such as receiving Christ, coming to him, eating the bread of life, of which expressions the same writer says, "Their meaning is not exhausted by a mere belief respecting Christ that he sustains a certain character, has performed a certain work, and is fraught with certain blessings. There is further implied a trustful reception of him and a personal application to him for such blessings as he has to bestow." Of the passage in John v. 40 the author says: "Here is not only unbelief in a statement, but the wilful refusal of an offer, which ought to have been trustfully and cordially accepted." Again in 1 John v., the apostle speaks of a record or testimony to be believed. The testimony is that God hath given us eternal life and that this life is in his Son, and con-



cludes therefrom, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." This passage plainly teaches that believing on the Son of God is not merely assenting to what Scripture testimony asserts concerning Christ, but is the actual having of the Son himself, without which, the having of eternal life is not possible. Merely to assent to the ability and willingness of Christ to save sinners, without the trust that actually commits the sinner into his hands, has no more virtue in it than the consenting to all the testimony kind friends may bear in favor of the skill of a physician, without an actual surrendering of ourselves into his hands for treatment.

In James ii, the faith which is mere assent to the truthfulness of Scripture doctrines is decidedly rejected. The person holding a mere belief in scripture propositions is represented as professing to believe that there is but one God, as if this settled his claim to be regarded a believer in the Christian sense. This faith in the unity of God is commended and is praiseworthy, especially at a time in which the prevalent and popular opinion was that there were gods many and lords many. Yet according to James this is not enough. There is an element wanting to constitute faith in Christ, and what can that be but this important element of trust in Jesus, which begets a willingness to comply with the whole discipline of the Gospel unto salvation.

We may appear to have given more testimony on the nature of faith as involving trust and an action of the will, than was necessary, but our justification is that our whole argument to establish the connection between faith and sanctification hinges upon this point—that if our opponents are right in their definition of faith they can safely defy us to show that faith necessarily begets a life of obedience and true holiness. Besides, the testimony is interesting in itself and varied in expression, and bears upon a subject which is not only vital to our argument but, what is infinitely more important, to the salvation of immortal souls also.

Again, faith, beside bringing us under the personal influence of Christ and of his Holy Spirit, also brings us under the power of divine truth and under the influence which the realities of the whole spiritual world are capable of exerting upon the mind. The beings, objects and occurrences of the invisible realm revealed in the Scriptures have an effect upon us according to their nature, similar to that which the objects and events of the sensible, visible world are

able to produce. This we will not stop to prove, as few will be disposed to question it, but will proceed to inquire whether it is to faith that we are indebted for bringing our minds into connection with these unseen spiritual verities. Now we feel confident that this can be established respecting faith inasmuch as it is by it that we attain to a knowledge of the existence of the invisible world with its beings, objects, and events, and to such a realization of the same as to experience their influence upon our minds and conduct. As proof of this assertion respecting the office of faith, we refer to the word of God, which describes faith as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, hereby teaching that it is by means of faith that we attain to certainty in regard to the existence of unseen things and confident expectation of obtaining that which we hope for, thus having to do with objects that sense cannot lay hold of. By faith Moses looked out toward a recompense of reward so far in the future and so unlikely, that neither the power of reason or sense extended to the same. By faith he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Faith brought God near to him and made him as real to his spiritual eyes as was the king of Egypt to his bodily vision. In John iii. 11 f. we are assured that Christ came to tell us of heavenly things, and likewise that it is by faith that his testimony is to be received. This is equivalent to saying that for our knowledge about heaven and heavenly things we depend upon our faith in the veracity and competency of Christ as a witness. From these several passages of Scripture it is plain that faith is the instrumentality by means of which we know, realize and appreciate the persons and things that make up the world beyond the sphere of sense. Archer Butler represents faith as the realizing power in respect to spiritual things. He says, "Its office is to make us see the unseen; to be the visual sense of the Spirit; beholds God around us even now; sees this world pervaded by the providence of God and haunted by his angels. The spiritual system that encompasses us as Christians is the constant sphere of faith. And beyond them both stretches out into infinity that everlasting world which faith accepts with equal certainty."

Alexander Knox says, "What is faith but an apprehending of divine things as realities? He who finds himself in a storm on ship-board needs not argue himself into alarm, nor strive to recollect all the various circumstances of danger. If, therefore, divine and eternal

things do once impress themselves as facts, religion will grow out of that impression by a necessity of nature, and in proportion to its strength it will influence all the movements of the inner and the outward man. The making then of this impression is the great operation of divine grace. Man cannot give it himself. \* \* \* To have faith then is to have that lively sense of divine things which makes them efficient on our hearts, tempers and conduct. \* \* \* All men would shudder at feeling the shock of an earthquake, and would alike avoid a pestilential contagion. The things of eternity rightly impressed upon the mind, are at least as much fitted to subdue all minds and work upon all tempers as either the earthquake or the pestilence."

To this argument, however, it is objected that it involves an inconsistency, inasmuch as the faith which connects with and brings under the influence of the whole truth of God's word is a very much more comprehensive thing than the instrumental faith to which Protestants ascribe justification; that in order to establish a connection between faith and sanctification we find ourselves under the necessity of quietly introducing into faith elements, which it was to our purpose to exclude when speaking of the faith that justifies because it simply apprehends the merits of Christ.

Möehler, for instance, claims that even Luther in his celebrated description of faith is in most amiable contradiction with the Lutheran theory of justification; that he became entangled in his own distinctions, ascribing to faith as the moral vivifying sentiment, the power of justification; whereas according to the whole tenor of his system it is to faith as the organ which clings to the merits of Christ that he must impute this power. Goodsir, in his examination of the Westminster Confession, cites passages from Melancthon's writings to show that he uses the term faith in an ambiguous sense—sometimes making it equivalent to trust or a part of faith, and sometimes using it in its full sense; that he, for example, ascribes forgiveness and comfort of heart to trust, and yet elsewhere says that by this faith which comforts our hearts the Holy Spirit is received. He says further that trust is no more faith than a part is the whole, and that it is contrary to fact to describe the faith which receives the Spirit and works righteousness as identical with the trust which, according to Melancthon, receives justification. He passes a similar criticism on the authors of the Westminster Confession, maintaining that in the chapter (14th) on saving faith, they reintroduce every-

thing done by faith itself, the act of believing and evangelical obedience, which they had carefully excluded from justification in the eleventh chapter, thus putting in place of that instrumental faith from which every moral quality had been eliminated, a full and rich faith which is the fruitful mother, under divine grace, of all Christian acts and habits. The substance of this writer's objection is summed up in the following words: "Absolutely nothing about faith has any connection, either as an element or condition, with the external justification of salvation, except that so-called instrumental part or function of faith. What then, is this part or function of faith? And, if it can be pointed out, how is it connected with the other parts or functions of faith and with the internal elements in general, which along with the external or imputative elements constitute our redemption?" He claims that it is utterly impossible to answer these questions satisfactorily.

The gist of the objection made by these several writers is that we have a certain kind of faith which receives forgiveness and reconciliation by apprehending Christ, and that when we are called on to show how this faith—the only part of justification that has its seat in the mind—produces sanctification, we at once and boldly slip other elements into it, and thus make it an entirely different thing from the faith by which we are justified.

In replying to this objection we admit in the first place that the *fiducia* or trust to which we attribute justification is not identical with the term faith in its other sense, in which it is equivalent to belief in all the truths revealed in the Bible; yea, so different are they that the first alone has the power of producing pardon and restoration to God's favor, while the second may exist in the hearts of men who continue in sin and end in destruction. But while trust or faith in Jesus is different from the mere belief in the truth of Scripture, yet the former is never without the latter, as the latter may be and often is without the former. By this we mean to say that the faith which trusts in Jesus and forms the condition of justification always involves and presupposes belief in the testimony of Scripture; in short, that where the *fiducia* or trust exists there the *fides* or faith is also necessarily found. And herein, we feel assured, consists the connection between what Goodsir calls the part and the whole, and which connection he confidently asserts cannot be pointed out.

In 1 John iii. two faiths are spoken of—believing on the Son of

God, and believing the record or testimony that God gave of His Son. It is very plain that the former, the believing on the Son, expressed afterwards as having the Son, is distinct from believing what God says concerning the Son. Just as distinct as confidence in a physician whom we knew not before and for ourselves, is distinct from the testimony of the friend who induced us to entrust our life into his hands. And yet at the same time it is equally clear that the two things are connected, that the believing on the Son ensues because we make not God a liar but believe the testimony he gives in behalf of his Son. Such, then, is the connection of the faith called trust and the faith which is equivalent to belief of Scripture testimony, that wherever the former exists the other must have previously existed, that faith in Christ is an evidence and guarantee of faith in the truthfulness of all that is contained in the Scriptures. Accordingly, Chalmers says, "It is impossible that any one should believe in one thing on the ground of finding it in the Scriptures and not believe in everything which he finds to be there; or that he should believe in one saying of God because of confidence in his truth, and yet not believe in all his sayings." Bishop O'Brien in his *Ten Sermons on Faith* says: "Confidence in Christ is grounded upon the testimony of God's word and requires of course a belief in that testimony; but it is manifestly distinct from such belief."

Our conclusion, therefore, is that whoever believes that Christ has had mercy on him, because of what the Scriptures say of his goodness and love, is in a state of mind in which he must necessarily believe everything to be true which the Bible sets forth as true; and faith in Christ will, as we have claimed, gradually bring a man under the influence and operation of all the facts and doctrines made known in the word of God, and whoever has come under the influence of truth has come under an influence that sanctifies; for the Saviour himself prays, "Sanctify them through the truth; Thy word is truth," cf. 1 Pet. i. 22.

We have thus far, in following up the working of faith, ascertained that it brings into personal union with Christ, and as a consequence receives the personal gift of the Holy Ghost; also that it brings us under the operation of the various truths revealed in the word of God. We will yet further show that faith also begets and establishes the principle of love within our hearts, by which love we are constrained to do the things that are pleasing unto God. As to the



effectiveness of love in producing and controlling our actions, there can be no question. The Saviour declares that love to God and love to man virtually constitute the sum total of human requirements; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. The apostle Paul, after mentioning various commandments which Christians are bound to observe, adds, "And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and reaches this general conclusion, "Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Elsewhere he says, "The love of Christ constraineth us."

In reference to the influence of love, Alexander Knox says, "Our love is ourselves. If we love base things we are base; trifling, we are triflers; earthly, we are worldly; divine and eternal things, we are spiritual and heavenly. Faith then is such an apprehension of divine things as makes the things apprehended the object of supreme love."

Jacob Abbott has such confidence in the transforming power of love that he sums up his directions to parents in moulding their children, somewhat as follows: "Secure their love and then be in their presence what you want them to be." Archbishop Whately has a most excellent discourse on the subject, "Love toward Christ as a motive to obedience." In it he says that one of the most striking peculiarities of the religion of Christ is its continual appeal to the affections. He admits that Christ and his apostles also address themselves to the reason and the interest of men, but, especially in the case of believers, they chiefly insist upon love toward Christ as the mainspring of all their conduct.

The Catholic system, as is well known, attributes nearly everything in the matter of sanctification to the power of charity (love) which is the chief part of the inherent righteousness that expels sin and brings forth the works of righteousness.

The power of love in producing obedience to the divine precepts being universally admitted, there remains but one point further to be decided, Does this love owe its origin to faith, or may faith at times exist independently of love?

St. John declares that we love God because he first loved us, thus basing our love toward God upon his previous love to us. Now it is self-evident that this love to God could not possibly spring up out of the love of God toward us, unless we also believed that God did

really love us as claimed. St. Paul in Galatians says, "faith worketh by love." Here evidently a close connection is affirmed between faith and love; yea, to faith a habitual working is ascribed as though it were its nature to operate by means of love. It is true that Cardinal Bellarmine argues that this passage ought to be read in the passive voice, meaning that faith is wrought or perfected by love. Boyse in his work entitled "Wrought Gold," has very satisfactorily and briefly answered this objection, by pointing out that the objection disagrees herein with the Fathers, and with their own Vulgate which is made binding on Catholics by the Council of Trent, as also with the English translation approved by the Church of Rome.

Again, the case of the woman at Simon's house teaches very plainly and emphatically that love is the result and fruit of forgiveness, as forgiveness is the fruit of faith. Thus the Saviour in the question he puts to Simon concerning the two debtors clearly intimates that love will follow forgiveness, and from his approval of Simon's answer it is equally clear that in his judgment, love not only flows from forgiveness, but is exactly proportioned to the extent of the forgiveness. And from this principle, that love is in proportion to the greatness of the sins forgiven, he argues that this woman's sins were many, for she loved much. And then, that the love might not be viewed as the cause of the pardon, instead of the consequence, he says very plainly in verse 50, "Thy faith has saved thee." This passage (Luke vii. 36-50) is in itself abundantly sufficient to prove the point made, that faith is the cause of love. But as this is a vital point in the controversy between Rome and Protestantism, as it in fact decides the dispute against Rome and all who with her say that faith cannot be depended upon to account for and to produce sanctification, they naturally make most desperate attempts to prove that faith does not invariably and necessarily bring forth love. Bellarmine accordingly discusses this proposition, "Whether justifying faith can be separated from love." He undertakes to maintain the affirmative of this question, but as Davenant asserts, shrewdly changes it into another, "True and Christian faith which justifies per modum dispositionis can be separated from love and other virtues." Dominic Soto, another theologian of Rome, maintains the proposition in this form, "True and orthodox faith and that which is necessary for justification, can exist without charity." Davenant over against them defends the Protestant view

that faith and love invariably go together. We will not stop to follow out his argument, as enough has already been said to establish the fact that according to the Scriptures, love is the natural and inevitable product of faith; that constituted as is the human mind, where there once exists a sense of guilt and misery through sin, and this is followed up by the conviction that through the merciful intervention of Christ, this guilt and its punishment has been remitted, and that in due course of time even the stains of sin are to be completely wiped out—there can be no other state of mind than that of grateful love toward him who has delivered us.

The teaching of our Confessions is very clear and strong on the subject of the relation which faith and love bear to each other. Thus the Apology declares, "It is extremely foolish and improper on the part of our adversaries, to contend that even those who deserve eternal wrath, obtain forgiveness of sin through love or self-selected works of love; whereas it is clearly impossible to love God until the heart has taken hold of the remission of sins through faith. For a heart filled with anxiety and truly feeling the wrath of God, can never love him until he gives it relief and comfort and assures us of his grace. \* \* \* What the Scholiasts say concerning the love of God is a wild conceit; it being impossible to love God before we know and embrace his mercy through faith. Then only does God become an object amiable, lovely. \* \* \* How is it possible for us to love God when involved in such great terror and unspeakable agony, or feeling the great and terrible displeasure and wrath of God, which are then more forcibly felt than any one on earth is able to express or describe." Even Alexander Knox, who with Bishop Jebb regards justification by faith as a mere notion and nonentity, having no effect upon the heart and the affections, admits that "it may be the legitimate parent of feeling" in instances "where through error or ignorance there is a despair of divine mercy," and allows "that for this malady the truths included in the forensic system are perhaps the specific." From this admission it is very natural, with the Christian observer, to infer that if this doctrine is a specific for the very lowest forms of depression, a cure for the severest types of spiritual diseases, it will be an efficient remedy in all other cases.

Finally, in summing the points we have established in respect to faith, we find that wherever the faith that justifies exists, there will be the following results as a consequence of that faith. Faith brings

the believer to a willingness to surrender himself completely to the control of Christ; this effects a union between the believer and Christ, and secures the personal effort of Christ for the believer's salvation from the dominion of sin. In consequence of this union, the Saviour having now engaged himself to accomplish the believer's restoration to holiness, puts him permanently in charge of the Holy Spirit, who, taking up his abode in the believer's heart, is continually at hand to instruct, to guide, to correct, to restrain from every wrong doing and to incite to righteousness—in short, to superintend and carry on the whole process of sanctification and salvation. By faith the believer is further brought into contact with, and under the operation of all the objects and beings that make up the whole invisible world around us, as far as these objects and beings are revealed in the Scriptures; or in other words, it brings him under the influence of all revealed truth, that truth which is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and makes the man of God complete and thoroughly furnished unto all good works. This truth the Holy Spirit makes use of as a means of promoting the holiness of the individual given into his charge. This truth contains the most powerful motive force that can be brought to bear upon the human mind, whether to beget or regulate activity. Besides, faith also supplies an impulse from within in the direction of holiness—the impulse of love, the most constant and powerful principle that we have any knowledge of—a principle which, according to Christ, is the sum and substance of the Ten Commandments, the essence of the whole duty of man. Through faith then the believer is brought under the operation of the most powerful inner impulse in existence; under the operation of the mightiest external motives in the universe, and under the personal care and supervision of the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of sanctification; and if these combined influences are not adequate to guarantee the believer's holiness, then we feel very confident that nothing that the ingenuity of Rome has ever been able to suggest in place thereof, is worthy of a moment's consideration.

We conclude this discussion then in the words of our Article, "From all this it is manifest that our doctrine, instead of being charged with prohibiting good works, ought much rather to be commended for teaching the manner in which truly good works can be performed."

## ARTICLE XXI.

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# INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS.

BY J. C. KOLLER, D. D.

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THE subject of Article XXI. of the Augsburg Confession gives a clear and succinct statement *De Cultu Sanctorum* or *Vom Heiligendienst*. As read before the Emperor, the language is as follows:

"*De Cultu Sanctorum* docent, quod memoria Sanctorum proponi potest, ut imetemur fidem eorum et bona opera iuxta vocationem, ut Caesar imitari potest exemplum Davidis in bello gerendo ad depellendos Turcos a patria. Nam uterque rex est. Sed Scriptura non docet, invocari Sanctos, seu petere auxilium a sanctis, quia unum Christum nobis proponit mediatorem, propitiatorium, pontificem, intercessorem. Hic invocandus est, et promisit se exauditurum esse preces nostras, et hunc cultum maxime probat, videlicet ut invocetur in omnibus afflictionibus. 1 John ii. 1. *Si quis peccat habemus advocatum apud Deum, cet.*" Müller, *Symbolischen Bücher*, p. 47.

"Concerning the invocation of saints our churches teach, that the saints may be held in remembrance, in order that we may, each in his own calling, imitate their faith and good works; as that the Emperor may imitate the example of David, in carrying on war to expel the Turks from our country; for each of them is a king. But the Scripture does not teach us to invoke saints, or to seek aid from them. For it proposes Christ to us as our only Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest and Intercessor. On him we are to call, and he promises that he will hear our prayers, and highly approves of this worship, viz.; that he should be called upon in every affliction. 1 John ii. 1: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—*Gen. Synod's Book of Worship*.

The phraseology of the English translation fails to bring out some few shades of meaning found in the German and Latin texts, which are of sufficient importance to be noticed in the body of the discus-



sion. The contents of the Article do not formally include the veneration of relics and images, neither do they specifically mention "Virgin worship," both of which are in themselves vast subjects for research, and will therefore only be mentioned in illustrating the main thought to which the present treatment is limited by the Lutheran doctrine on the worship of saints.

#### WHO THE SAINTS ARE.

Although the Confession does not distinctly specify who the saints are, it is in place here to venture a brief definition, because the question in controversy has been made to turn on a correct understanding of the declaration in the Apostles' Creed: "*I believe in the communion of saints.*" The silence of the confessors has been misinterpreted. Even the saintly Claus Harms\* italicised his opinion: *We have no saints.* But Carpzov† summarizes the beliefs of the early Protestants as follows: "The saints are those who once believed in God, were faithful to him, trustingly fulfilled their calling in life, and are now living in heaven." This appellation is founded on the word of God and establishes that the saints are, *first*, all true Christians,‡ baptized in the name of the Triune God;§ separated from the ungodly;|| consecrated to Christ¶ and justified by his righteousness.\*\* To this objective characteristic there belongs, *secondly*, a subjective qualification, namely, inner striving after holiness;†† unblemished earthly citizenship;‡‡ a steady advancement in the cardinal graces of a spiritual life§§ and a perceptible increase of power over temptation,|||| not implying, however, sinless perfection¶¶. And the *third* peculiarity to be marked is the distinction between the saints on earth and the saints in heaven. They are the saints in the church militant who are found in all places where the Gospel has been accepted\*\*\* and those of the church triumphant who have a share in the resurrection of Christ,††† shall participate‡‡‡ in his second coming, and with him §§§ judge the world.

\* Die Augsburgische Confession, 216.

† Isagoge in Libros Symbolicos, 537.

‡ Rom. i. 7.

§ 2 Peter ii. 9.

|| 2 Cor. vi. 17.

¶ 1 Cor. i. 2.

\*\* 1 Cor. vi. 11.

†† Acts xv. 9.

‡‡ 1 Pet. i. 15.

§§ 2 Pet. i. 5-8.

|||| 2 Cor. vii. 1.

¶¶ Compare Pusey: Rule of Faith, 165.

\*\*\* Ps. xvi. 2, 3; Acts ix. 32; 2 Cor. i. 2.

††† Matt. xxvii. 52.

‡‡‡ 2 Thess. i. 10.

§§§ 1 Cor. vi. 2.

Only those are denominated saints in heaven who had been truly such upon the earth; so that to the times of Irenaeus and Tertullian all who were united to Christ are known as the *hagioi*. And the confessional writings lay strong emphasis upon this fact, showing how faithfully the Holy Scriptures portray not only the virtues but also the mistakes of the saints, in order to enforce the need of prudence in imitating their examples. Luther at one time forcibly insisted that the little word "*holy*" was applied by the sacred writers only to the living believer in the name of Christ, and that God permitted scarcely any great saint to live faultlessly—as Moses, Aaron, Miriam, David—lest dependence should be placed in their examples and works to the neglect of God's word.\*

Doubtless the Confessors were justified in their moderate and carefully guarded opinion, for the Roman Catholic theory on what constitutes saintliness differs materially from the Protestant. Its defenders call those who belong to the visible communion "the faithful," and those of the invisible communion are "the saints."

Bellarmino is authority for the generally adopted definition:† "The saints are the spirits of pious men (*hominum*) who are released from the body and need no purgation, but are already admitted into the fruition of blessedness which consists in the clear vision of God." An analysis of this tenet, in the light of the writings and practices of its advocates, brings into prominence these points: The saints are the men and women who have professedly led Christian lives and perfectly fulfilled the will of God; who have gained superior sanctity by works of supererogation; who, after, death, have power to work miracles through the instrumentality of their bones or in answer to the supplications of the distressed; and *finally*, who have been canonized or authoritatively placed in the ranks of saintship.‡ It is not maintained that the Bible sustains or justifies this theory. The Council of Trent, in formulating and defining the subject of invocation, did not pretend to cite any testimony from Christ or his apostles to designate those who are to be invoked. The most important factor is canonization. The reverence shown to the uncanonized is far inferior to that offered to the canonized. At first it was the people—say the Christian people—who created the saints, just as it

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\* Plitt: Einleitung in die Augustana, II., 436.

† De Beatitudine Sanctorum.

‡ Comp. Berger: Ev. Glaube, etc., 272.

is the people now who, in their mysteriously unconscious power, bestow upon some favorite ruler the surname of the "Great" or the "Good." But nothing else could be expected than that in such an act of beatification the limits of human ingenuity would occasionally be reached, and some one would attain to saintly preference whom posterity has either forgotten, or who, perhaps, has never lived at all. The beautiful legend of St. Christopher is nothing but an allegory, and has no better foundation than the pious wish, ever since the days of Ignatius, that every Christian should be a Christopherus—a *Christ-bearer*. Thus also the legend of St. George and the dragon is a noble symbol of the victory of Christianity over heathenism. These are inspiring examples; but the *Flos Sanctorum* and the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists both teem with far more sensational and legendary literature. Yet they pretend to contain only reliable history.\* Carpzov pronounces the *Vitae Sanctorum* "fabulous."

Stimulated by this underground tendency to beatify and by the literature growing out of it, the monks, from very early times, lived in the highest expectation of becoming saints; the common people, impressed with their lives of devotion and piety, silently accorded them superhuman honors; the bishops, sympathizing with these manifestations of faithfulness, reported the cases to the pope, and he, if satisfied with the life, manner of death and works, would add the sanction of his authority, and the worship would be no longer confined to a single community.†

When order and system became necessary in the classification of the faithful who had died, canonization became a prerogative of the pope. The Roman Curia had pronounced in individual cases as early as the 10th century, but in the 12th the chief pontiff began to exercise as his exclusive right what the reformatory councils of the 15th vigorously but fruitlessly attacked. In his jurisdiction lies the power to determine who are worthy of reverence and adoration. Hence, as Hase naively remarks, he has, as in the case of delivery from purgatory, more power in heaven than on earth. No angelic or spiritual beings can prevent him from peopling the upper world with his own creatures, but the political influences and national prejudices of this world can hamper him with limitations, as for in-

\* Miracles and Saints, 60.

† Neander: Ecclesiastical History, III., 447.

stance, when the opposition of the French and Spanish crowns forbade the canonizing of Bellarmine himself.\* This is one of the unfortunate, but fatally consistent outgrowths of that doctrinal development which the great English Cardinal has so masterfully substituted "for the insufficiency of scriptural testimony." Such unwelcome interferences go far in discrediting expedients which have no firm support in the "*pillar and ground of the truth*." But they who entrust themselves to the uncertainties of evolution must be prepared to encounter its vagaries and eccentricities. There is only One who has the right to canonize. "My Father has given them unto me."† "God shall exalt them."‡ "I will give thee the crown of life."§ Hence Wickliffe is moved to say: "Canonization by the pope is blasphemous, because, without direct revelation, no human being can be certain of any one's future state." And Luther, who is generally more concerned about the execution of his words than their elegance, exclaims: "How often may a devil be esteemed a saint, and we consider those saints who belong to hell."|| He would not have changed his mind if he had lived a while longer, for is not St. Raymund worshiped as a confessor on the ground of having induced the King of Aragon to establish the inquisition in his kingdom? And was not Pope Pius V. canonized,¶ although his hands were stained with the blood of thousands of faithful disciples of Christ, and he bribed Rudolfi to assassinate Queen Elizabeth?\*\*\* Even Pius IX. placed in the ranks of saintship Don Pedro Arbues after he had burned hundreds of converted Jews who had been found guilty of attachment to the religion of their fathers. What possible communion can there be between these saints of the Inquisition and the saints of the New Testament! It is not a difference in *time*, but *spirit*. And so radical a difference between Protestant and Catholic, as to the characteristic qualities of the true saints, will go far in determining what honor would be accorded them.

#### THE HONOR ACCORDED THEM BY THE CONFESSORS.

Their language is unmistakable: "Concerning the invocation of the saints, our churches teach that the saints may be held in remem-

\* Hase: Polemik, 301 *et seq.*, discusses canonization fully and admirably.

† John x. 29.

‡ James iv. 10.

§ Rev. ii. 10.

|| Luther's Works, Erlangen Ed., VIII., 37.

¶ Very few popes were canonized.

\*\*\* Jenkins, 199.

brance in order that we may, each in his own calling, imitate their faith and good works." The German text is a little more specific and conveys a few additional ideas.\* The doctrinal statement, though pronounced in its antagonism against worshiping the saints, is not open to the charge of disrespect for them, though Romanists have persistently put that misinterpretation upon it. A fair interpretation of the phraseology will make clear several salient points, all of which are rooted and grounded in the word of Truth.

1. The saints should be held in remembrance because thereby the honor and glory of God will be promoted. The honor ascribed to them is an *actio gratiarum* †—an expression of gratitude to God, who works in his saints the accomplishment of his will and supplies them with an abundant measure of faith and courage. "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance." ‡ Melancthon § amplifies this sentiment in the Apology: "The honoring is done by thanking God for showing us examples of his grace in the lives of the saints, and for supplying the church with teachers and other gifts. Now as these gifts are great we esteem them, and praise the saints who made good use of them, as Christ in the Gospel praised the faithful servants." || Paul commends such a remembrance when he writes to the Galatians that those who praised him without ever having seen him face to face *glorified God in him*. ¶ According to some of the best expositors of the Confession, this remembrance does not necessarily terminate in pronouncing eulogies upon their remarkable virtues and achievements, but permits the use of pictures and images as an effectual means of recalling the history of their lives and sufferings; and it approves also of festival days to commemorate the anniversary of some notable event in their career. Luther says: "If invoking them is abandoned, pictures may be used to represent them to our eyes, just as letters are used to convey ideas to the mind." \*\*

2. In preserving the remembrance of the saints we obtain confirmation of our own faith. In honoring them as monuments of God's infinite love and mercy there is quickening and encouragement to

\* Müller: Symbolischen Bücher, 47.

† Walch: De Augustana Confessione, 329.

‡ Ps. cxii. 6.

§ Müller, 223.

|| Matt. xxv. 21-23.

¶ Gal. i. 24.

\*\* The authority is not that of the Symbols, but of Luther: Guericke, Symbolik, 238.



our spiritual life, because they are the practical examples of human possibilities under the power of divine grace. The Apology says: \* "By their example we strengthen our faith. Thus, for instance, when we see that through the rich grace of God Peter's sin was forgiven after his denial of Christ, our hearts receive strength to believe that grace abounds much more than sin.† The Scriptures also extol and celebrate the gifts of God communicated to the saints, and praise the saints themselves for having made good use of them. The commendation of the Baptist by the Saviour;‡ the eulogy of Stephen upon the Old Testament worthies;§ and that grand epic|| in the epistle to the Hebrews, are striking illustrations of the confessional teaching. But in according the saints this honor, the Reformers were careful to emphasize the distinction between what they called the reverence of the knee and the reverence of the heart.¶ They agree with Augustine in saying: "We honor the memories of the martyrs, in order that by that celebration we may both render thanks to God for their victories and encourage ourselves to the emulation of their crowns and palms."\*\*

3. The saints should be held in remembrance by imitating the examples they left the world while living. "Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith."†† The language of the Confession, amended by that of the Apology, gives a clear conception of the teaching: "We honor them by following their faith, love and patience, each one in his own calling." As an illustration there is cited the case of the Emperor studying, in his preparations for the conflict with the Turks, the example of David as a model of imperial wisdom and courage. The apostolic fathers—notably St. Clement—called attention to this idea. In his Epistle to the Corinthians he writes: "Let us steadfastly contemplate those who have perfectly ministered to his excellent glory—Enoch for his obedience, Noah for his faithfulness, Elijah for his humility."‡‡ To these can be added the piety of Mary the mother of Jesus, Hannah's attachment to the house of the Lord, the unwearying fidelity of St.

\* Mueller: *Apologia*, 223.

† Rom. v. 20.

‡ Matt. xi. 4.

§ Acts vii. 5.

|| Heb. xi.

¶ Chemnitz, *Examen Concilii Tridentini*, Pt. III., Cap. 3, Sec. 1.

\*\* City of God, Chap. 8.

†† Heb. xiii. 7. Mueller, *Sym. Büch.*, 224.

‡‡ The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I., 7.

Paul, Stephen's steadfastness in the faith, and the love of St. John for his fellow-man. Melancthon stoutly insisted that saintly intercession consisted in "the living saints praying for one another," and Hildebert of Tours, who represented the spiritual Christianity of the twelfth century, says: "The only genuinely Christian element lying at the foundation of true saint-worship is: Love among them in life.\* Remembering † the bonds of the saints, ministering ‡ to their necessities, holding collections § for their benefit, emulating one another in showing them preference of place, || bearing their burdens ¶—this is the Christlike and apostolic manner of doing them reverence; or in the words of Luther,\*\* "the right spiritual exaltation and honor belonging to the saints." Thus also pleads truthful Cassander ††—the amiable and enlightened Roman Catholic divine—in his *Consultatio* to harmonize the Augsburg Confession with the faith of the Romish Church: "*These* are the true relics of the saints, which must be imitated by the faithful, namely the examples of their godliness and virtues, as found in their writings and their lives." We are reminded here of the beautiful saying of Agobard, of Lyons: "Better copy the works of the living saints than invoke the intercession of the dead saints."

That a remembrance of the saints such as is authorized and encouraged by a correct understanding of the Confession, should be more faithfully advocated and observed, goes without saying. It will not involve Protestant Christendom in any superstitious practices. Why should we hesitate to pronounce eulogies over the righteous and noble souls whose faithfulness has added so much to the moral refitting of this globe? To be unappreciative of the saints on earth, to withhold from them recognition for their instrumentality in carrying forward God's purposes of salvation, to ignore them as exemplars of a godly life while present here, usually presages an excessive adulation and superstitious veneration for them after their death. How natural that is, too! Men of high religious aspirations, who have labored for the revival or reformation of religion—after having received ridicule and persecution on all sides except from a small body of homage-bearing disciples—have been apotheosized and worshiped as virtual deities after death. On the other hand, a

\* Neander, Ch. Hist.

† 2 Tim. i. 5.

‡ 2 Cor. ix. 1.

§ 1 Cor. xvi. 1.

|| Rom. xii. 10.

¶ Gal. vi. 2.

\*\* Works, Erlangen, xxiv., 249.

†† Jenkins: Romanism of Pius IV., 215.

remembrance founded in the truths of God's teachings interpenetrates the heart with that spirit which humanizes all sensibility and fixes the instinct of adoration upon God. It has been the universal experience of the best men that the closer one's communion with Christ, the intenser will be the feeling toward all true believers—not to worship them after death, but to associate with them in life—for the consciousness of true religion, the real, living consciousness is, for one thing, the power of God working in the soul a longing after communion with the saints. In such a feeling of veneration for them there is a most salutary fascination. How natural that the eye should follow into the upper world the noble souls who were our friends in adversity, or who had been instrumental in our advancements—the old pastors, the beloved teachers of our childhood and early youth, the revered preceptors of our maturer years! Even though we do not direct our petitions to them, “they sometimes seem to be flesh again; they breathe upon us with warm breath; they touch us with soft responsive hands; they look at us with sad sincere eyes, and speak to us in appealing tones; they seem to be reclothed in living human reality, with all its conflicts, its faith and its love. Then their presence is a power, then they shake us like a passion and we are drawn after them with gentle compulsion, as flame is drawn to flame.”\* There is an instinctive out-reaching for their presence and helpfulness. Was it not Tintoretto who in painting a head of the Christ, filled up the background of his picture with the infinitesimal heads of saints, so that their watchful eyes might keep him from dealing irreverently with the sacred theme? What wonder that Luther once said:† “It was an incalculably bitter thing for me to break loose from the veneration of the saints; I was profoundly absorbed in it and completely saturated with its influence.” It was not only for the sake of peace, but from a spirit of pious regard for all believers, that the early Reformers made all possible concession on this vital question of dispute. The Augsburg Interim Article XXIV.‡ may have been somewhat *too* conciliatory in the interests of genuine conservatism: “On the remembrance of the saints we hold that they pray to God for us and help us with their service.” Ground somewhat similar to this was taken by the Leipsic Interim. Even Melancthon concedes that the Augsburg Confes-

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\* George Eliot never wrote a tenderer sentence.

† Works, Erlangen, lv., 120.

‡ Herzog, i., 612.

sion itself may leave a loop-hole to suppose that the saints in heaven may pray for the church in general, *in genere*, with the qualifying remark, however, that such a notion has no stronger testimony in the word of God than the dream of the great Maccabean general.\*

So then it is at least an error of judgment on the part of Cardinal Gibbons † when he claims "that the Reformers of the sixteenth century, in denying the communion of saints, not only inflicted a deadly wound on the Creed, but also severed the tenderest cords of the human heart. They broke asunder the holy ties that united earth with heaven, and the soul in the flesh with the soul released from the flesh." The indignant answer of Chemnitz ‡ to this long-exploded charge may suffice: "It is false that we dishonor the saints or allow them insufficient regard, as if their remembrance were not to be celebrated. But our complaint is against the papal church, because she neither retains, fosters, nor demands the honor of the saints as defended in the word of God, but obscures, perverts, and destroys it."

And this is not only the teaching of the Confession itself, but of all its expositors and apologists. The Church can safely afford to stand by the interpretation. Walch § gives a list of authorities to show that the Augustana does not stand alone on this doctrinal platform. It is the general doctrine of Protestantism, the *catena* of sound scriptural teaching, the *consensus doctorum* of Evangelicalism, || that the saints should be held in remembrance because thereby (a) God is honored, (b) our faith confirmed, (c) and their lives ennobled.

#### THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DOGMA.

But the foregoing is not the doctrine of the papal church. The Confession's remembrance of the saints is entirely inadequate in the estimation of Roman Catholic theologians. It did not satisfy the Confutators even proximately. Whilst they agreed to ten articles of the *Augustana*, disputed the doctrinal tendency of seven, and partially condemned three, this one they rejected *in toto—simpliciter damnant*, as Melancthon sententiously observes. With them the *Cultus Sanctorum* was not a question of honoring the saints but

\* 2 Mac. ii. 14, 15.

† Faith of our Fathers, 190.

‡ Examen, Pt. III., Sec. 1.

§ In Libros Ecc. Luth. Sym., Cap. 111, 329.

|| See also Guericke: *Christliche Symbolik*, 235; and Winer: *Confessions of Christendom*, 68 f.



worshipping them, not of remembrance but veneration, not of commendation but adoration. They would not agree, says Walch, to the most reasonable concessions or conservative limitations. Tittman argues that they were compelled to take this stand or abandon their church. Plitt affirms that Eck charged against the evangelicals sixteen errors with regard to the saints, and would not listen to the mention of a reconciliation. A glance at the subject as elucidated and defended by such profound thinkers of to-day as Cardinal Newman, the editors of the *Dublin Review*, Cardinal Gibbons, forces any one to the conclusion that if this dogma were yielded by Romanists, the strongest link in the chain of their teaching would be broken. "The profoundest of the causes which separate the Churches lies in the Mariolatry and saint-worship of Rome; while most of the other controversies involve only the means and appliances of worship, this relates to the very object and end of it."\* The question whether the saints should be religiously invoked and adored, they settle with the most positive and irreversible affirmative.

1. *The Council of Trent*,† in its twenty-fifth session, December, 1563, formulated the floating theories and opinions as follows: "On the invocation of saints, the holy synod enjoins on all bishops and others who sustain the office and charge of teaching, that, agreeably to the usage of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, received from the primitive times of the Christian religion, and agreeably to the consent of the holy fathers and the decrees of the sacred councils \* \* \* they especially instruct the faithful concerning the invocation and intercession of the saints; the honor paid to relics; and the legitimate use of images; teaching them, that the saints, who reign together with Christ, offer up their own prayers to God for men; that it is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers, aid and help for obtaining benefits from God through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our alone Redeemer and Saviour; but that they think impiously who deny that the saints who enjoy eternal happiness in heaven, are to be invocated; or who assert either that they do not pray for men; or that the invocation of them to pray for each of us in particular is idolatry; or that it is repugnant to the word of God, and is opposed to the honor of the *one Mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus*; or that it is foolish to supplicate, vocally or mentally, those who reign in heaven."

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\* Jenkins: *Romanism of Pius IV.*, 189.

† Schaff: *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. II., 199.



It will be noticed here that the assistance of the saints is a theory, not founded on the Bible, but on their imagined co-regency with Christ—*una cum Christo regnates*—and intercessory rights; and their invocation is “good and useful” rather than necessary and indispensable. In so far the Tridentine deliverance differs from the Greek Confession\* of Peter Mogila,† who pronounces prayer to the saints a *chreos*—necessity, and makes Mary and the other saints a *meseteia*—mediation with God.

2. We are, however, not limited to the decree of the Council of Trent for a knowledge of the papistical understanding of this system. It receives ample elucidation in the devotional and educational books authorized by the Church. In the *Psalter of Bonaventura*,‡ for instance, we find characteristic improvements on some of the Psalms. On the i Psalm: “Blessed they who love thy name, O Virgin Mary!” On the vii: “O most excellent lady, in thee do I put my trust.” On the xix: “The heavens declare thy glory, O Virgin Mary.” On the cx: “The Lord said unto my most excellent lady: My mother, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-stool.” These are a few specimens from an abundant mass of similar supplicatory addresses. The *Catechismus Concilii Tridentini*, the primer of religious instruction for the youths of the Romish communion, ascribes divine worship to the angels and apostles.§ The *Breviary* which was prepared under a decree of the Council of Trent and sanctioned by numerous papal ordinances, though full of legends, if not offensive to good taste, morals and sense, nevertheless unprofitable,|| yet acknowledged with praise by Dr. Newman,¶ contains a prayer\*\* which ascribes equal honor to the saints with the Father and the Son. In the *Litany of the Saints*,†† as found in one of the latest missals, there is an *ora pro nobis* for fifty-

\* Guericke: *Christliche Symbolik*, 244.

† The symbolic book of the Eastern Church.

‡ Chemnitz, without passing judgment on its merits, gives the most complete synopsis of this book to be found. See *Examen*: Pt. III., Sec. 2.

§ Leipsic Edition, 1851.

|| Miracles and Saints, 79.

¶ Development of Christian Doctrine, 411.

\*\* Sacrosanctae et individuae Trinitati, crucifixi Domini nostri Jesu Christi humanitati, beatissimae et gloriosissimae semperque Virginis Mariae foecundae integritati et omnium sanctorum universitati, sit sempiterna laus, honor, virtus et gloria ab omni creatura.

†† Cathcart: *The Papal System*, 309.

one saints with specified names from St. Michael to Santa Anastasia, besides all the holy angels and archangels, patriarchs and prophets, holy apostles and evangelists, holy innocents, bishops, confessors, monks and hermits, all of whom are invited to be mediators with God even though the Vulgate itself says: "There is *one* mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus." A *Litany* of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries contains similar ascriptions—a notable one to St. Laurentius: "O thou who wast roasted alive, come, bring consolation to us miserable ones."\*

3. These expressions are not repudiated, but defended by the highest authorities in the Church of Rome. Pope Pius IV.† says: "I believe likewise that the saints reigning together with Christ are to be honored and invoked." Alphonso Liguori,‡ who was himself canonized by Pope Gregory XVI., invoked the Virgin Mary as queen of heaven: "Save me, O powerful queen, save me by the intercession of thy Son." Gregory XVI. closes a letter:§ "Let us raise our eyes to the most blessed Virgin Mary \* \* who is our greatest hope, yea, the entire ground of our hope." Cardinal Newman,|| interpreting saint-worship as the central doctrine of Athanasius, says: "The sanctification or rather deification of the nature of man is the main subject of his theology." And in his exposition of Father Segneri's theology he acquiesces in the opinion that "all the saints have participated sonship, divinity, glory, holiness and worship."¶

4. A few instances of the practical working of the system will demonstrate how tenaciously it has taken hold of the minds of its advocates and how deeply it is rooted in their religious instincts. A refusal to adopt it incurs at least the suspicion of heresy. The Church condemns all who in any wise hesitate to accept the decree of the Council of Trent. Pope\*\* Benedict XIV. intimates that disparaging the worship of saints is, if not a positive heresy, at least a sin of unbelief, and further says, "that whosoever shall dare to assert that the pope has erred in this or that canonization, brings scandal upon the whole church, is a maintainer of an erroneous proposition and deserving of the severest punishment." That these covered threats of excommunication are carefully remembered by the laity

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\* Vilmar: *Geschichte der Deutschen National Literatur*, 578.

† Cuming, 297.

‡ Ibid, 299.

§ Ibid, 301.

|| Development, 140.

¶ Ibid, 435.

\*\* *Mediæval and Modern Miracles and Saints*, 74.

is manifest from the universal silence in regard to the most offensive superstitions. Some of the most conciliatory writers feign to disclaim them, but no one ventures now to discountenance them. In truth, the Romish Party in their *Confutation* of this 21st Article of the Augsburg Confession—1530—*take pleasure* in showing that the Albigenses, Picards, and other heretics, new and old, were deservedly condemned for their opposition to worshipping the saints. Even Cardinal Gibbons\* goes no farther than to say: "There are expressions addressed to the saints in popular books of devotion, which, to critical readers, may seem extravagant. But they are only the warm language of affection and poetry, and are to be regulated by our standard of faith." But what care the devout Calabrian and Sicilian assassins and robbers for the "standard of the faith?" They join the honest peasantry and artisans who flock around the shrine of an imaginary saint, and bother little about the sophistical distinctions of theorizing ecclesiastics. As late as 1872 a pilgrimage, comprising in its successive divisions two hundred thousand people, was organized in France to do homage to St. Philomena, "the thaumaturgist of the nineteenth century," and to the virgin of La Salette, and this by sanction of Pio Nono and the secret connivance of the French government.†

Gathering information from all available sources, viewing Roman Catholic teaching on all sides, confining ourselves to its own authorities, yet remaining within the bounds of fairness and justice to a church numbering so many millions, to which our confessors at one time belonged, we come to the following summary of its faith on the invocation of saints:

1. The saints who have departed from this life are to be religiously invoked in calamity, addressed in prayer, and worshiped in the conviction of their intercessory power. "Roman Catholics do not honor the saints with that worship only wherewith we do men which excel in virtue, etc., but also with *divine* worship and honor, which is an act of religion."—*Bellarmino*.‡

2. Of this adoration the saints are worthy because by their works of supererogation and superfluous merits they supplement our defectiveness, stand between the divine righteousness and human unworthiness, and mitigate the severity of the one intercessor in

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\* Faith of our Fathers, 182.

† Mir. and Saints, 159.

‡ Quoted by Pusey in Eirenicon, 107.

order that we may become participants in the promises of God. "Because we believe in the communion of saints, therefore we hold communion with them in prayer, and because we pray to them they carry our prayers to God."—*Cardinal Gibbons*.\*

3. To this end all the faithful are admonished to an unwavering confidence that the beatified in heaven see, know, hear and understand all the special wishes of individuals and the silent thoughts of the spirit, are near at hand in every moment and able to answer every petition. "Just as the mass and indulgences work for the good of the dead, so the saints through their intercessions work for the best of the living. They are in a similar way the mediators in heaven as the priests are upon the earth."—*Thomas Aquinas*.†

With this doctrine of saint-worship in Latin Christianity, agrees that of the Oriental church. The Greeks invoke the Virgin Mary as the mother of God, the saints and martyrs as sub-mediators, the angels as protectors and defenders, and venerate relics and images as intermediate instrumentalities in the worship of the Trinity.‡ On minor points there is some slight diversity, but the essential features are similar. At the Council of Florence the Roman Church was willing to receive the whole body of Eastern canonized saints.

#### THE ORIGIN OF SAINT WORSHIP.

How did the invocation of the saints originate? A historical inquiry, so far as we have access to the most authentic sources of antiquity, invests the subject with additional interest and exhibits its tendencies in clearer light.

In the Old Testament it is unknown. Said an eminent Rabbi in a recent sermon: "Israel has never forgotten its noble heroes, nor its martyrs. It has paid them their tribute of tears and mourns them still; but it never made saints of them; it never worshiped them; never preserved their relics and worked miracles with them." "The Hebrews § were allowed to pass to heaven, or purgatory, without any apotheosis or beatification." The young King Hezekiah quickly "brake in pieces the brazen serpent of Moses,"|| contemptuously calling it "nehushtan," when he noticed the growing signs of

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\* Condensed from *Faith of our Fathers*, 181.

† Herzog: *Encyklopædia*, xvi., 71.

‡ Guericke: *Symbolik* gives the original, 244.

§ Edgar: *Variations of Popery*, 462.

|| 2 Kings xviii. 4.

idolatry among the people. Like Leo and Constantine and Theophilus, he would shatter into fragments anything that detracted from the supreme honor of God. The religion of the true Hebrew was founded on one grand declaration: "Hear, O Israel,\* The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve."† This, according to Origen's reply to Celsus, excluded likewise angel-worship. After quoting the first commandment he says: "No one who obeys the law of Moses will bow down to the angels who are in heaven."‡

The best and most ancient authorities§ maintain that the early Christians were strangers to saint-worship—*ab invocatione sanctorum alieni*. Chemnitz|| calmly and boldly affirms that in the best and purest times of the Church, *i. e.*, of Christ and his apostles—yea, even in post-apostolic times—the invocation of saints is utterly unknown—*prorsus ignota*. With this statement corresponds the universal testimony of reliable Church history. In the first and second centuries of the Christian era it was perfectly natural that the memory of those believers, who had lost their lives in the persecutions on account of faith in the Christ, should be gratefully revered. The anniversary of their martyrdom was called their birthday, and was celebrated sometimes with enthusiastic fervency. The people¶ assembled at the tombs of these martyrs to offer prayers to God and excite themselves to faith and patience by the solemn recollection of their virtues. Narratives of their confessions and sufferings would be read, the Lord's Supper would be frequently celebrated in commemoration of communion with the departed and the consciousness that they were resting from their labors and receiving their rewards in a conscious and continuous life with God. These observances, or *oblaciones, sacrificia pro martyribus*, originally presupposed that the martyrs were like all other fallible, sinful human beings, and not entitled to any superhuman or celestial honors. That there was not the least shadow of intercession, or invocation, or worship, we gather from a description of Polycarp's martyrdom\*\* in the middle of the

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\* Deut. vi. 4.

† Matt. iv. 10.

‡ Ante Nicene Fathers, IV., 545.

§ Walch mentions in his *Introductio in Libros Ecc. Lutheranae Symbol.* as valuable: Chamierus in Panstrat. Catholic, tom II., lib. 20, cap. 7, 409. Beblus: Antiq. Ecc. Secul, tom III., Art. 7, 980.

|| Examen Conc. Tri., Pt. 3, 398.

¶ Guericke: Christliche Symbolik, 231.

\*\* Neander: I., 596.



second century. In their report the congregation at Smyrna say: "Be it known that by honoring the departed we neither leave our Saviour nor worship any one else, but love the martyrs as they deserve for their unsurpassable love to their associates and fellow disciples." Of which touching and most important account Chemnitz remarks with positiveness, that it remains uncontradicted by any ecclesiastical information from those earliest times.\*

Then,† as the consciousness of lukewarmness and growing worldliness became more and more a reality in the Christian experience of the second and third centuries, there arose a longing among the most faithful, after the piety and godly character of those who had died for their testimony to the faith. The more people declined in religious fervency, the more they began to revere those who had been so far superior to them. Their memories would not only be privately treasured, but transmitted to others. Memorials of them would be tenderly preserved;‡ their tombs would assume the nature of sanctity; their martyrdom would become more and more the season for popular celebration; the saints' days would become holidays. Thoughts upon thoughts in this line of meditation would follow: having prayed for their fellows in life, it was unnatural that these departed would cease doing so after death. Their prayers had been intercessory in this world, why should they not be so in the next? Cyprian went so far as to ask the living to continue their intercessions for him after they had entered into their rest.§ Nevertheless there is not yet the least manifestation of an invocation such as the papal dogma demands. The most rhetorical panegyrics were no more than rhetoric. Even the most pronounced opinions were only individual and private, and not the public or authoritative deliverance of the Church. Not the least sign of Mariolatry had yet appeared. Pusey shows that the story of Justina "beseeching the mother of Christ to succor a virgin in peril from the assaults of Satan" is without foundation.|| And in the "Acts of the Martyrs" there is not one genuine instance where any of those terribly persecuted confessors of Jesus asked help amidst their superhuman sufferings except from God, or our Lord. The self-confident appeals to what the advocates of saint-worship call "patristic

\* Examen, Pt. 3, Sec. 5.

† Kurtz: Church History, I., 221.

‡ Mozley: Theory of Development, 25.

§ Chemnitz: Examen, Pt. 3, Sec. 5.

|| Eirenicon, 108.

testimony" for its justification, have no better foundation than the traditional and legendary accounts of impossible and improbable saints.\* Jerome, whose angry opposition to Vigilantius is universally cited as an insuperable defense of the invocation of saints, has not a syllable about *invocation*, but simply speaks of honoring them.† Even Origen admits that if the saints in heaven do anything for us, it is included in the divine secrets and not recorded in human transactions; even if they do pray for us, that is no reason why we should invoke them; and in his controversy with Celsus he flings the impassioned rebuke into the face of this arch-enemy of Christ: "We must offer adoration to God alone."‡

And yet it is he who sowed the first seeds of what afterwards ripened into one of the most popular and tenaciously supported of papal practices. Thoroughly imbued with Platonism§ he believed as implicitly as any of the disciples of the great philosopher, that the souls of good and virtuous men, after the decease of the body, are turned into angels or good demons, and fly about the world helping men and defending them from evils and mishaps. It was an easy matter to transfer this apparently innocent belief, with unimportant modifications, to the souls of the saints, and make the philosophy of Plato an integral portion of the religion of Jesus. But that which won the approbation of educated heathenism for the time, developed in the next century into opinions which threatened to destroy the knowledge of Christ.

The first unmistakable manifestations of saint-worship in its modern signification appear at the close of the fourth century.|| It then became customary to address formal and personal appeals to the departed, both in prayer and the orations on festival days. Basil, bishop of Caesarea, A. D. 370, stands foremost in practically appealing to the dead. In a eulogy pronounced over the martyrdom of forty soldiers by Julian the apostate, he suddenly broke forth: "O ye united defenders of the human family; ye exalted companions of suffering; ye fellow associates in prayer; ye mighty helpers!"¶ But the Gregories quickly surpassed him in their declamatory eulogies.

\* See *Vitae Patrum*, a book characterized by Mr. Lecky in a note to the fourth chapter of his "History of European Morals" as "one of the most fascinating volumes in the whole range of literature."

† Melancthon in Apology, 223,

‡ Chemnitz: Ex., Pt. 3, Sec. 5.

§ South: Vol. II., 496.

|| Chemnitz: Examen, Pt. 3, Sec. 5.

¶ Bossuet-Cramer: Einleitung.

Nazianzen declares of Basil: "Now he is in heaven; now he sacrifices for us; now he prays for the people;" and the dead Athanasius he addressed: "But do thou look in mercy upon us from thy lofty dwelling place!" Gregory of Nyssa, in paying a eulogistic tribute to the martyr Theodore, cries out: "O blessed one, we implore thee to intercede for our Fatherland!"\*

These are some of the causes which lie at the root of saint worship—namely, the natural devotion to the memory of the martyrs—the deep longing in times of religious decadence after their wonderful attainments—the subtle influence of the Platonic philosophy on the educated mind, and the growing power of superstition upon the masses. And it is of supreme significance that invocation did not obtain full sway until after the death of the church fathers. They lived before the darkness of the middle ages obscured the pure spiritual life. Chemnitz sorrowfully laments that opposition to it ceased as the light of instruction expired and the night of superstition culminated in forgetfulness of God. After the death of Augustine, the Church was delivered up, bound hand and foot, into this semi-heathenism. Peter Fullo, who had been condemned by the fifth general synod, was the originator and first to introduce (470) saint-worship into the hymnals and litanies of the Church.† But it was not until the beginning of the seventh century when Gregory the Great‡ firmly and formally promulgated a new article of faith, by adopting the cultus of the Virgin Mary and the other saints into the regulated public worship.

Its introduction into the Oriental Church occurred somewhat later, and in the course of the iconoclastic controversies. John of Damascus had defended it beforehand on traditional grounds, but it was not ecclesiastically adopted until the second Nicene Council§ in 787. And although the rise and progress of this "relic of heathenism," as some one expressively calls it, was very slow and subtle, its original germs fastening themselves in parasitic fashion on the young and vigorous growth of Christianity, nevertheless by the beginning of the fifteenth century it had enfolded the entire tree like a poison

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\* Bossuet-Cramer: *Einleitung in die Geschichte der Welt und Religion*, 4, 341.

† Chemnitz: *Examen*, Pt. 3, Sec. 5.

‡ Tittman: *Augsburgische Confession*, 126.

§ Guericke: *Christliche Symbolik*, 245.

ivy, striking its deadly tendrils into every fiber, sucking out the life forces of pure spiritual worship and threatening to deprive it of all its fruitfulness. Milman\* tells us that the saints "intercepted the worship of the Almighty Father, the worship of the Divine Son. To them rather than through them prayer was addressed; their shrines received the more costly oblations; they were the rulers, the actual disposing Providence on earth."

And yet, if Protestants are permitted to judge according to the noted rule of Vincent de Lerins, viz.: That whatsoever is Catholic must be adopted *semper, ubique, omnibus*, invocation of the saints was by no means universally accepted. Epiphanius severely reprehended it and classed it among the heresies. Chrysostom† repeatedly censured the disposition of the common people to have recourse to the saints in prayer. So did many others of prominence in the Greek Church. The twenty-fifth canon of the Council of Laodicea, in the fourth century, pronounced angelolatry idolatry. Helvidius,‡ an energetic reformer of the fourth century, opposed it on the ground of Holy Scripture, reason and morality. Ambrose rejected it, in his best days, as a heathen superstition. The bitter controversy between Jerome and Vigilantius grew out of the latter's charge that to invoke the dead was ridiculous and heathenish.§ The views of Augustine—though he is claimed as a mighty defender—fairly stated, show that he thought it doubtful whether the dead, through God's power, participate in the affairs of the living; whether the saints can furnish assistance; prayers are not to be centered upon the dead, but upon the adorable and ever-living God; catholic Christians adore no dead being; the apparent miracles at the tombs of the martyrs, if genuine, are the work of God; "whom shall I find that can reconcile me to God? Only the one true Mediator, Jesus Christ, who is my only hope."|| And the influence of his opinions was felt throughout the later history.

Claudius, of Turin, A. D. 820, petitioned the Emperor Ludwig to have the images taken from the churches, and himself preached "like fire" against all visible mediators, admonishing the people to

\* Latin Christianity, Vol. IV., 13, 204.

† Chemnitz; Examen, Pt. 3, Sec. 5.

‡ Herzog: 5, 730.

§ Herzog: 5, 692.

|| See Chemnitz, Pt. 3, Sec. 5, chap. 3, for condensed passages from Augustine's writings.

enter into communion with God through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ.\* Charlemagne (840) directed that no new saints should be catalogued for veneration.† Gundulph of northern France, in the 10th century, insisted that the saints had no miraculous power. Archbishop Guibert,‡ Chancellor of Emperor Henry III., vigorously wrote against it. One of the most pronounced elements of opposition on the part of all the sects in the Middle Ages, was war against saint worship as a corruption§ of primitive Christianity.

These utterances—manly and positive as they may be—are only the sporadic and unorganized protests of individual believers, whose voices were speedily silenced by the edicts of councils, the anathemas of popes, and the irresistible tendency of the increasing ecclesiasticism. It was left to the Confessors at Augsburg to frame a definite doctrinal statement against the invocation of the saints; and this they did on one insuperable and conclusive argument.

#### I. IT IS CONTRARY TO THE WORD OF GOD.

*“The Scripture does not teach us to invoke saints or to seek aid from them.”* The language is brief, but well chosen and decisive. In the true spirit of conciliation, they were prepared to let their case rest on this conservative utterance; but Luther, the falcon-eyed leader of the Reformation, was more far-seeing and gives added strength to the statement of the confessors. In the Smalcald Articles|| he says: “Saint worship is neither commanded nor advised and has no example in the Scriptures.” The confutators vainly perverted “the law and testimony” to overthrow the evangelical argument. The Council of Trent does not pretend to supply any authority from God’s word in support of its standpoint, and Eck in his Manual for Catholic Christians expressly admits the fact, but passes it over as immaterial.

Yet this was the impregnable fortress of the Reformers. “It is a dishonor to the Church,” says Chemnitz,¶ “to introduce or adopt an article of faith for which there is no safe, solid and unmistakable testimony in the canonical Scriptures; and this is of special importance in regard to prayer and worship, for here our relation to Divinity needs precise definitions.” That Cardinal Gibbons considers this argument of the weightiest importance, is plain enough in his

\* Herzog: 17, 191; Neander: 3, 132;  
§ Ibid.

|| Mueller, 305.

† Neander.

‡ Ibid.

¶ Pt. 3, Sec. 3.



attempted vindication of saintly invocation. Admitting some doubt about his reader being satisfied with quotations from the "ecclesiastical writers of the first ages" as proof of Roman Catholic teaching, he tacitly acknowledges the testimony of the Bible of essential importance. He says:\* "If you have no doubt that the saints can *hear* your prayers and have the *power* and the *will* to assist you, you will readily admit that it is salutary to ask their intercessions." Then he adduces numerous texts to show that the saints hold communication with us, have the ability to aid us, and are willing to exert their influence in our favor. He gives to his reasons the most plausible coloring, full of learning, wisdom and a truly Christian spirit; but there are three serious objections to his citations; and, as his are the citations upon which the Church of Rome has built whenever she attempted any scriptural defense of saint worship, the objections to them will refute the usual appeals to divine authority in justification of this dogma. (1) Those passages which he urges with the greatest vehemence and plausibility are taken from the Apocryphal books. (2) Those which *are* cononical, do not, when subjected to the strictest rules of fair interpretation, settle his premises. (3) He cites not a solitary passage that directly commands invocation, and those which positively forbid it he does not mention at all.

A brief examination of a few of these passages is demanded both on the score of fairness to our opponents and in proof of our own allegations. 1. Judas Maccabeus† in the night before his struggle with the impious Nicanor, in a dream beheld Onias, the high-priest, long since dead, standing with outstretched arms and praying for the people of God. But this book is apocryphal: Judas recites a dream to animate his troops—not an actual occurrence; it is not proven that Onias was cognizant of the individual and special circumstances of the people; neither Judas nor his army had invoked Onias, but the Lord God of heaven and earth.‡ 2. Jacob on his death bed asked the angel to bless his two grandchildren.§ Therefore we ought also to invoke the assistance of created beings, reasons Romanism. But Jacob here invoked the benediction of an uncreated Being—the *Malak Jehovah*—the Second Person in the Trinity,

\* Faith of our Fathers, 185.

† II. Maccab. xv., 14.

‡ Gerhard; Loci Theologici, 27, cap. 8, page 96.

§ Gen. xlviii., 16.

as Luther\* has most conclusively shown, by clearly pointing out the use of the singular verb in Jacob's entire petition, which proves that he believed the angel to be one with his father's God and the God who had shepherded him in his weary pilgrimage. 3. The fathers of the old covenant frequently made use of the names and merits of the patriarchs in their appeals to Jehovah.† Hence we should make similar use of the saints. But it was only and solely in God's covenant of promise to the patriarchs that these ancient people consciously reposed the guaranty of his gracious and holy guidance, hence in their prayers they did not appeal to the merits of their forefathers, but to the merciful promises of the Lord.‡ 4. Numerous passages§ are cited by the controversialists to show that intercessions should be made for all the saints. But the two men—whom no one ranks in logical and spiritual acumen to interpret the word of God—Chemnitz and Gerhard—unquestionably prove that these quotations from the sacred writers refer expressly to the prayers *of the living for the living*, and that of prayer by those who have entered into their rest there is neither an admonition or example or promise in the canonical Scriptures. 5. There was shown to the Revelator|| a golden bowl of incense—the *prayers of the saints*. But these are the ascriptions of glory the saints render to God in heaven—their prayers to God, not the petitions of mundane suppliants *to them* on account of which they should be invoked, sacrifices offered to them, holidays appointed to their honor; churches, altars and monasteries erected to their exaltation. 6. God answered to Jeremiah's supplication¶ for mercy on the Jewish nation: "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people;" and does not that indicate God's readiness to hear the intercessions of the dead? The truth conveyed is that idolatry is such a dreadful thing that even the living presence of these great lawgivers could not save the guilty. 7. The reprobate Dives\*\* in the place of torment could hold communication with the just Abraham in Paradise; why can there not then be interchange of thought between the saints in heaven and their brethren

\* Speaker's Commentary, *in loco*.

† An instance; Gen. xxxii. 9.

‡ Oehler, O. T. Theology, 66.

§ 1 Tim. ii, compared with Rom. xv.; Col. iv.; James v.; Gen. xviii. and xx.; Job xlii.; Ezekiel xxii.

|| Rev. v. 8.

¶ Jeremiah xv. 1.

\*\* Luke xvi. 24.

on the earth? And this is absolutely the only instance of intercession to a saint recorded in God's word; and it is utterly rejected; the example is not encouraging.

There is absolutely no mention in Scripture of any *examples* giving the least encouragement to invocation. On the contrary, wherever celestial beings appeared upon earth all attempts at adoration were resisted. The same abhorrence shown by Paul and Barnabas at Lystra\* and Peter's gentle but peremptory rebuke of Cornelius,† In the face of worshipful prostration, appears in the instances of attempted angelic adoration. When John fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, the latter charged: "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brothers the prophets: *worship God*."‡

Neither is there any ground of proof in favor of invocation of created beings in the case of the Theophanies which form a prominent feature in the early history of the Old Testament Scriptures, and which are repeatedly cited by Roman Catholic writers to justify their system of worship. Cardinal Newman, for instance, appealing to Augustine, affirms that here is the natural introduction to the *Cultus Sanctorum*§ and the primary ground from which the development of the doctrine has arisen. He maintains that those visible appearances were creatures, no matter what they represented, and if so, then the patriarchs were the first who worshipped creatures, not indeed in themselves, but as the token of the One greater than themselves. But is it not begging the question to affirm that these patriarchs consciously worshipped the Creator in the form of a creature? They prostrated themselves before a Presence, but did they assume it to be a created presence? Did not Moses hide his face because he was afraid to look upon God? Did not Jacob say: "I have seen God face to face?" There is absolutely nothing to show that they consciously worshipped the infinite Divinity hidden under the form of a secondary divinity; for in instances of their bowing down before a supposed created presence, it was after the manner of an oriental obeisance, and not an exhibition of divine worship. But even on the supposition that they had rested their worship instrumentally upon the visible presence, and spiritually located it upon

\* Acts xiv. 15.

† Acts x. 26.

‡ Rev. xxii. 8, 9, Vulgate.

§ Development of Christian Doctrine, 138.

the invisible, it would none the less remain true as Mgr. Pannilini,\* bishop of Chiusi, pointedly says: "Worship ought not to result in the object underlying it, (or redound in it)—but be given to that object." And if there was an emphatic opposition to all idolatry in the patriarchal worship—as the Romish argument concedes—how much less ground for the least semblance for it now, since grace and truth have come by Jesus Christ.

Neither the pious appeals of Roman Catholic divines, nor the acute reasonings of the profoundest theologians, nor the infallible pronunciamientos of œcumenical councils, have yet been able to answer the words of the Confessors. There is not an available sentence in the Bible, either of precept, example or promise, which they can fairly cite to favor saint worship. On the contrary, the entire system is unqualifiedly condemned by commandment, instruction and admonition. And if it be charged that Protestants in general and the Confessors in particular argued their own opinions into the word of God, the quick rejoinder that those opinions are consistent with that Word is just as true as the historical fact that the Confutators perverted the plain teachings of holy scripture and deduced from them utterly irrational conclusions, which, in defiance of reason and common sense, are defended as the abutments of papal authority.

*But is the teaching of the Holy Scripture sufficient?* In answer to this question the Romish Church to-day produces, not officially it is true, but none the less gladly, that masterly work of John Henry Newman on the Development of Christian Doctrine. Its entire argument may be crystallized into the terse expression: "A doctrine to be catholic needs not be proven by Scripture; it is the product of the Church's life." It is implied that the sacred writings in themselves are inadequate and thus virtually admitted, on the one hand, that the early Christians were at a great disadvantage, and on the other there is demanded of us a belief in the grandest, most comprehensive and fascinating system of worship founded upon nothing substantially proven; built up after the manner of scientific hypothesis, and settled by the laws of an ecclesiastical evolution! Thus, as Dr. Tulloch† happily expresses it, the author of the "development theory" and mightiest apologist for the central doctrine of Roman

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\* Jenkins: Romanism of Pius IV., 192.

† Religious Thought in Britain in the 19th Century.

Catholicism, with his ardent followers, has rummaged about among the debris of ancient and mediæval uncertainty, instead of throwing the bright light of his grand intellect and the fervor of his warm heart upon the living pages of the New Testament. The development of a doctrine rooted and grounded in nothing but a traditional faith, is not a sufficient justification for its acceptance in practice. Too many intellectual leaps over unbridged chasms are needed; too many demands to enter the shadowy realms of credulity for the heart accustomed to confide in the infallible alone.

Furthermore, though there be manifest everywhere a law of development and abounding evidences of physical, ethical, ecclesiastical and theological evolution, nevertheless the idea of degeneracy has established itself just as familiarly in our minds. Growth, in its unfolding realities, strikes us as most common; so does corruption in all its disgusting forms. We see things becoming better; we also see them getting worse; and some that have been better at first have assumed sad deterioration afterwards. Deflections arise, and then the departure from the straight line may be insensible at first, but none the less fatal in its steadiness. No reasonable human being will undertake to frame a denial to this sure law of decadence. When Dr. Newman,\* therefore, asks us to believe that invocation of the saints is a necessary development from primitive Christian worship, we may respectfully ask him to prove to us that it is not a divergence from the practice of the apostles and their successors.

At any rate, what was the office of our divine Lord as the great Teacher, but that of a perfect revealer of the whole truth as to God and his worship? Whatever the Father willed to disclose to man, the Son made known in all its completeness. After his resurrection, the Holy Ghost assumed the revealing work, and taught the apostles the same divine truth. The Lord himself had said to his apostles: "He shall teach you the whole truth, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."† "The Church of this day can not know more than St. John," says Pusey, "else the promise would not have been fulfilled to him."‡

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\* See Canon Mozley in "Theory of Development," page 5 f.

† John xiv. 26.

‡ Eirenicon, 85.



## II. INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS DEROGATORY TO THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

From the word of God as a sufficient revelation against the invocation of saints, we naturally turn to the Redeemer of mankind there revealed. The Confessors make this the next link in their argument. They say: "*The Scripture proposes Christ to us as our only Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest and Intercessor.*" In thus emphasizing the characteristic offices of the true Messiah, they ascribe to him all mediatorial glory. They can permit no subordinate, or co-mediators, as Harms\* calls them. Luther† states incisively in the Smalcald Articles that the invocation of the saints "is a part of the abuses and errors of Antichrist, and destroys the true knowledge of Christ as the Redeemer;" and in one of his sermons he adds, that "inasmuch as people lost their hold on Christ, and thought him rude and ungracious, they turned to the saints, supposing that they could by their exertions soften the acerbity of him who once said: 'Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden.'" And by that act they undermine the mediatorial authority of Christ, and rob him of the prerogatives of his sole mediatorship.

*But there can be only one mediator.* "The redeeming Saviour, whose destiny is to restore the fellowship with God interrupted by sin, must stand on the one hand in perfect fellowship with the human race, and on the other hand in perfect fellowship with God. Otherwise he can not form a bond of union between the two." Now it is inconceivable that a created being, glorified or unglorified, can stand at the same time in a relation of *perfect unity* with the human race, and also in a relation of antithesis to that race, not simply because he alone in the midst of a sinful world was without sin, but because no one can come to the Father except through him. He alone is the *giver*; all others are *receivers*. The lucid unfolding of this soteriological position by Martensen‡ is a conclusive commentary on the declaration of St. Paul: "For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." The glory of the only begotten one can not be understood unless we start with this conception of one God and one mediator. On this point the teaching of the Confession is so specific and so unmistakably consistent with

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\* *Mit Mittler und Nebenmittler.*

† Mueller.

‡ *Christian Dogmatics*, 259.

the teaching of God's word, that the confutators involuntarily acknowledged its logical conclusiveness by coining a distinction between a mediator of redemption and a mediator of intercession, in order to justify the employment of saints and yet keep up the appearance that it is not derogatory to the honor of Christ nor inconsistent with his sole mediatorship. But there is not a vestige of any such distinction to be found in the sacred Scriptures. Carpzov,\* in commenting on 1 Timothy iii<sup>2</sup> 5, quoted above, asserts that mediator of redemption and mediator of intercession are one and the same thing, and fortifies himself by quoting the authority of Origen, Augustine, and Isidore of Seville. Better yet is the authority of the New Testament. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."† "I am the way and the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."‡ "In none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."§ And that we need no other mediator requires no specific statement when we remember that Jesus Christ is both God and man,|| that he gave himself a ransom for the sin of the world¶ and that the Father has accepted him as having perfectly answered the demands of the law.\*\* The writings of the "Fathers" are a vast apologetic library on the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind. And the deepest soul longings, the purest consciousness of realized salvation, as recorded in sacred song, constitute unceasing testimony to the saving power of the Son of God. What a mass of Christology and truly precious soteriology in our best hymns! "Thou, O Christ, art all I want." "Light, riches, healing of the mind, Yea, all I need in thee I find." "Jesus, my Advocate above, my Friend before the throne of love." "Thou must save, and thou alone."

If there is one essential more completely fortified in Scripture than another it is this one of our salvation being possible solely and entirely on the merits of the God-man. He is the propitiation for our sins. "Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel."†† "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Upon this one passage the Confessors rely for the confirmation of their doctrine.

\* Isagoge in libros, etc., 545.

† John vi. 68.

‡ Ibid, xiv. 6.

§ Acts iv. 12.

|| John viii. 58; Matt. xvi. 13.

¶ Matt. xvii. 5.

\*\* Rom. iii. 25 and 1 John iv. 10.

†† Jeremiah iii. 23 and 1 John ii. 1.

But invocation of the saints presupposes their *intercessory powers*. This is indeed the central position of the doctrine so far as it touches the work of the Redeemer. So diametrically opposed to each other are Protestantism and Catholicism at this point, that when the former says: "The Israelites of old had no clear knowledge, as we have, of one great mediator, who is making intercession for us, *and yet* they sought not the good offices of the superhuman beings of whose existence they had no doubt, the latter replies, *and therefore\** they made no application to them for aid. They knew so little of Christ, *and yet* did not call upon the spirits of the departed, say the Confessors; the Confutators answer, because they knew so little of him *therefore* they failed to invoke those who had been saved by faith in his name. The Augsburg Confession teaches that there is only one intercessor on whom we are to call; and he promises that he will hear our prayers. He should be called upon in every affliction. The dogma of Rome is that angels and the saints, at whose head is the Virgin, intercede for us, and being able to hear and answer our petitions, "it is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them and to have recourse to their prayers." Romish dogmaticians in unfolding and enforcing this proposition as an indispensable part of their cultus, appeal to three very important considerations.

1. *The divine method of governing the universe.* With much earnestness and some plausibility it is argued that just as the Father in his creative and providential capacity employs the laws of nature for the administration of his purposes, so in the administration of his moral purposes he employs the agency of angels whom he has created as his ministering spirits. And just as Jesus uses the sacraments which he himself has instituted, and the prayers of the Church militant to promote the edification of the faithful, so he employs the intercessions of the church triumphant for their protection in calamity. "Who can doubt," asks the Roman Catechism, "that the saints take upon themselves the work of our defence, when he beholds the miracles wrought at their graves, the blind having received their sight, the lame healing, the dead brought to life, and devils expelled from their bodies"?† The analogy is not well taken; if the reasoning were conclusive we might inquire whether our prayers for temporal blessings should not be addressed to the laws

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\* *Dublin Review*, March 1883, 55.

† Berger: *Evangelischer Glaube*, 273.

of nature, inasmuch as our petitions for spiritual blessings are to rise to the angels and the saints. But the dishonor to Christ involved in such a pantheistic worship is not its only objection. Aside from its uselessness there is the reflex injuriousness arising from all selfish devotion. The heart which is forever crying after blessings is not the heart in which dwells the Saviour formed the "hope of glory." And although these saints and angels are "ministering spirits," whereas the laws of nature are but "blind forces," both are equally the messengers of God, and *He* is to be invoked for their intervention—the agent, not the agencies.

2. *Human sinfulness as against Christ's holiness* makes the intercessions of the saints necessary. Our sins render us very unworthy to come immediately to Christ himself, who is unreconcilable because of his immaculate purity, terribly displeased because of our transgressions. Luther attributed to this most foolish and erroneous notion the dreadful tenacity and commercial value saint-worship assumed in his day. People, in their God-forgetfulness, stood in terror of the judgment, and readily consented to pacify some tutelary inter-mediator to gain the benefits of his intercessions. The utter unreasonableness of this argument ought to make an appeal to the word of God unnecessary. Yet, does not Christ know them whom he invites and commands to come to him? \* "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do." † "Who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." ‡ Indeed, the entire Epistle to the Hebrews is a most precious demonstration that Jesus is the compassionate High Priest, capable of entering into intensest sympathy with every one. The Romanist maintains that the concern of his saint for him intensifies when he is translated from the here to the afterward, but the love of Him who rescued that saint is chilled by his ascension into heaven! We have not so learned Christ. "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you." §

3. *The incarnation of Christ* is regarded among Catholics as the invincible argument in favor of the *Cultus Sanctorum*. Christ is the God-man. The Son of God became the son of man. The divine entered into union with the human, and by virtue of this union the human partakes of at least certain communicable qualities of

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\* Matt. xi. 28.

† John xv. 16.

‡ Rom. viii. 34.

§ John xiv. 18.

the divine. As the divinity has become incarnated into the human nature so the humanity has become implanted into the divine, hence there is a divine humanity, at the head of which stands the second Person of the Trinity—the living bond of inter-communion between God and the redeemed race. All the saints are, therefore, constantly with him and participate in his activities. The entire host make out a sort of halo about him; each one partakes of the instinctive omniscience of Christ; wherever he goes they go; whatever he does they do; on earth infirmity clung to them, on high their being is made perfect, and they freely carry out that great part which here below they but rehearsed, and when the Scripture says: "The Spirit maketh intercession for us," the meaning is, the host of saints is praying for us, for the Spirit is the life of the Church.\*

The charge against Protestants is ignorance of the meaning and logical tendencies of the incarnation. If they understood the vast significance of this transaction they could not help but join in directing their supplications to the dead in Christ, and make that a fundamental doctrine of Christianity.

The thought demands sober treatment, reserved, if critical; reverent, if bold; "for nothing which has ever interested humanity or profoundly moved it, is treated with contempt by a wise and good man."† The difficulty lies not in denouncing the assumption, but in apprehending it; disputants who are more intent on assailing others than defending themselves will rather make loop-holes for the enemy than a way for their own escape. *Audi partem alteram.*

The profound importance of the incarnation on the cultus of the saints can not be belittled with a sneer. Doubtless, much of the Bible notion of man's relation to God has been obscured by theological bias. Thus the Johannic immanence of God has been obscured by the Agustinian transcendence. But the theology which removes God to an infinite distance from man does not harmonize with the philosophically and *humanely* fascinating thought of Scripture that God is very near at hand—in whom we live and move and have our being.

But what is more to the point is, that if the incarnation of Jesus implies an incarnation in the case of every believer, even in a limited sense, then Christianity is analogous to Buddhism,‡ which teaches

\* *Dublin Review*, March 1853, 44.

† Tulloch; 19th Century, 9.

‡ *Andover Review*, March, 1886, 310.



unlimited incarnations,—for every celebrated teacher is a Buddha. Probably the advocates of the invocation theory would not deny this inference, since the infallible church has enrolled in her martyr-ologies the two oriental (mythical) saints, Josaphat and Barlaam, though Max Mueller\* has shown that they are identical with Sakya-Mouni, the divine founder of Buddhism, and one of his apostles.

Nevertheless, Möhler answers: "They who would worship Christ, must invoke the saints," on the supposition that he dwells in them. And at the head of the great host stands the Virgin Mary—the mirror of purest womanhood, as says St. Ambrose, the impersonation of all virtue, \* \* \* the celestial exemplar of all grace, the *Theotokos*—mother of God. Protestants do honor her above all in the ranks of womankind; they allow her all legitimate exaltation; in no sense are they reluctant to sound the praises of the "Madonna who bore the child." To them she is a nobler ideal than to hosts of her worshipers. For do her Roman Catholic devotees venerate her piety, or renunciation of the world, or charity, or self-sacrificing devotion as a woman and a mother? By no means; but because she is supposed to be capable of miraculous power, there is this lofty adoration. Who is the Madonna in that Church to-day? Is it the lowly virgin who said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word?"† Is it the silent, self-renouncing, willingly obedient mother of the Redeemer as she is painted to us in the Gospel of St. John? Is it her pious earthly life which all their representations portray? Not at all. The Madonna is invoked for her ability to protect and her special intercessions with the Son of God. An impartial study of this Virgin-cultus leaves the indelible impression that the mother is greater than the Son, capable of more efficient sympathy, quicker to hear and answer prayer, and a mightier and more intimate friend and helper. This is the logical sequence of the Romish treatment of the incarnation. Adopt its conclusions, especially that it virtually defies whosoever is baptized into Christ, and you will be compelled to admit one of the most potent arguments in favor not only of Mariolatry, but hagiolatry in their unconditioned signification. That is to say, *in calamities*, which are the expressions of God's anger, the people must get near to some one who is close to God and has influence

\* *Contemporary Review*, July '70, 580. See also *Miracles and Saints*, 44.

† Luke i. 38.

with him—close to some one of the secondary intercessors. Even Dean Stanley traces back the longing after communion with some one near the great Invisible, to the passion, the vehemence, the urgency of some great sorrow like that of the French Christians in the fifteenth century uttering their piteous supplications for deliverance. The reply of Canon Liddon\* is sufficiently forceful in its conclusiveness: "Sorrow of itself does not make the prayers which it multiplies or intensifies, either lawful or availing. Sorrow may quicken the instincts of superstition."

But even here the Scriptures must remain the legitimate argument. Belief in the intercession of the saints is an evidence of unbelief in the complete and all-sufficient intercession of the Lord Jesus himself. Even in the darkness of the ninth century, Agobard of Lyons† said: "Since no man is essentially God, save Jesus our Saviour, so we, as Scripture commands, should bow our knees to His name alone, lest by giving this honor to another, God may consider us estranged from him." "He ever liveth to make intercession for them."‡ "And thus saith the Lord:§ Cursed is the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Such denunciation of all unauthorized reliance upon human beings and their religious veneration was loudly applauded in the early church. Tertullian|| asks: "Who permits you to accord to man that which has been reserved for the Deity? The martyr has enough to do with his own deficiencies. Who but the Son of God has delivered another from the power of death?" And Augustine: "Make no religion of the worship of dead men, for, if they lived piously, they look not for such an honor, but want us to honor him through whom they are able to rejoice in the light of truth." This decided opposition, little regarded by the ecclesiastical powers, but continued for many centuries, proves that pious Roman Catholics preferred to trust themselves immediately to the intercession of Jesus rather than to the intermediary prayers of the saints. The ingenious German poet, *Anjelus Silesius*,¶ though he had renounced the Protestant Church, nevertheless cries out:

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\* Bampton Lectures, 1866, p. 528.

† Heb. vii. 24, 25.

‡ Carpzov, 540.

† Neander, III., 429.

§ Jeremiah xvii. 5.

¶ Hase, 306.

“Weg, weg, ihr Seraphim ! ihr könnt mich nicht erquickten !  
 Weg, weg, ihr Heiligen ! und was an euch thut blicken.  
 Ich will nun eurer nicht ; ich werfe mich allein  
 Ins ungeschaffne Meer der bloßen Gottheit ein.”

And what is of equally serious consideration, the invasion of the prerogatives of Christ's mediatorial office by the admission of these numberless intercessors introduces an element of uncertainty into our own relations with Christ. The seeker after grace and wisdom and strength knows precisely whither to turn when he is conscious of only One almighty deliverer, and is unhampered by a multiplicity of inferior objects of worship. He need listen to one voice alone : “Come unto me.” But who among the subordinate mediators is the one most likely to hear his supplications, St. Ann or St. Michael? Confusion and embarrassment must distract his worship and rob him of the assurance of faith. Erasmus relates that a suppliant whose tutelary saint was Nicolaus, and who, during a shipwreck, when in the most threatening danger each one was calling on his particular patron defender, feared that his own saint would either not hear his pressing petition (the ship was already sinking), or had to pay attention to others who were invoking him at the same time, or might not speedily enough obtain audience of God, turned away from him and offered his petition directly to the only Saviour.\* Admit that this is but mockery. Is there not terrible significance in the incident, and does it not speak incontestably for itself? Wickliffe† saw the subject in the same light : “The devil may work in the pretended saints.‡ The soul becomes distracted by the multitudes of saints who are recommended for invocation. It may likewise turn out that the foolish devotee is worshiping a canonized devil.” And Luther asks : “Why will you forsake the safe and certain, and worry with that which has neither merit or necessity or command?”§ And does not this uncertainty grow into a crime when we consider the perilous loss of time which such indirect devotion involves? Every member of the Church of Rome claims that all our direct worship and service belong to God and his Christ ; but where, amid the few fragments of time allotted us on earth and our manifold engagements, shall even the most devoted Christians find time to divide their devotions between the direct and indirect?

\* Titman : Augsburg Confessio, 128.

† Neander.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 1.

§ Works, liii., 139.

Here we may stop long enough to emphasize the irresistible conclusion that invocation of the saints is *illogical, unnecessary, and useless*. It has no solid foundation in reason. Being contrary to the contents of the divine revelation, it must stand in conflict with the enlightened and unprejudiced understanding. The laws of thought and promptings of the heart contradict its claims. The God who speaks in his word speaks also in his rational creations. And that it is unreasonable to demand our worship for those creations after their transition into the unseen world, must be manifest from their very nature. The saints in heaven differ in no vital particular from those on earth as concerns their attributes. Canonization even can not communicate to them any extra endowments, can not remove external and internal obstacles, can not remedy the essential limitations. Romanism, without giving the proof, asserts that it can; Protestantism replies, it can not, because the Bible nowhere gives the least intimation of any such prerogative, or of any added rights and powers after death. Have the saints any knowledge of our circumstances? This involves the question of their omniscience and omnipotence, at least ubiquity, perpetual cognizance, hearing prayer, reading the heart.\* They are either in possession of these divine attributes or they are not. If they are not, then worshipping them is the baldest and most useless superstition. True, the Council of Trent conditions the promulgation of this dogma on the abandonment of all superstition, but remains shrewdly silent as to what manifestations of superstition are intended.

But Romanists† insist that the saints do possess all the necessary attributes for intercommunication with the faithful; they know all about us; distance is but an accidental interruption; space can not interfere in intellectual communication; it is absurd to suppose that matter can constitute any obstacle to spiritual communication between earth and heaven. The blind man can not see his friend, but that does not imply that his friend has lost the power of seeing him. If, however, the blind man knows anything, he is conscious that his friend can see him without the power of seeing all things, and be present with him without being everywhere present. It is easy enough to see that the Romish reasoning rests on probabilities, and

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\* *Dublin Review*, 1853, p. 48 f.

† Milman, *History of Christianity*: Book IV., 426.

the principle of probability doubtless plays an important part in many a man's religion; but this is no more than a process of "make believe," as Tulloch characterizes the theory of Newman and his followers. Only assent strongly to anything and the power of intellectual creativeness may in time project it as a reality to the vision of the credulous. Does not my friend of whom I have heard nothing for twenty years pray for me any more? Granted he does; but *what* special petitions does he offer in my behalf? My circumstances are entirely changed. Does not my father, who died when I was a lad of fourteen, intercede for me any longer? But how shall he know the present character of my environments, which he must know if his intercessions are to have any practical efficacy? Praying *in general* is not the key-note of this system of worship. Protestants readily admit that the saints are in a conscious state of existence, and that the departed in the church triumphant belong to the same mystical body with those in the church militant; but that the spirits of the dead are accessible to those of the living, capable of hearing their prayers, knowing their thoughts, and answering their requests, they can not admit as a reason to invoke their intercession *unless it be unmistakably demonstrated by divine teaching*. Even Cardinal Cajetan admits that "we have no certain knowledge as to whether the saints are aware of our prayers."\* Prayer to them is an act of worship, but an untrammelled and unbiased heart demands a distinct revelation or an express injunction for such an act of worship. The soul does not want to be launched out on an ocean of follies and phantasies. Why should any one leave the known for the unknown? There is a profound reason in the prayer of that German unbeliever: "Oh, God, if thou art, reveal thyself unto me!" It is God's nature to reveal himself to his pleading children. But for how many centuries already have devout saint worshipers fruitlessly cried to some departed one for only a word from the unknown! The eternal silence remains unbroken. "And Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee *BEFORE I shall be taken away from thee*."† The eyes of King Josiah were *not to see* the evil coming upon his nation.‡ "Thou art our father though Abraham be ignorant of us."§ Says Winer: "If the Romanists are

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\* Quoted from his *Secundæ*. *Secundæ* by Jenkins on Romanism, 194.

† 2 Kings ii. 9.

‡ 2 Kings xxii. 20.

§ Isaiah liii. 16.



misapprehended, they are themselves to blame,"\* for in defining their positions they use words which imply everything Protestants charge against them. And the subterfuges,† to which the Roman clergy are compelled to resort, to show how the saints may become cognizant of the wants and wishes of men, is a virtual confession on their part that nothing is known or can be known in regard to their status in the unseen world.

### III. SAINT-WORSHIP DEGRADES THE SPIRITUAL WORSHIP OF GOD.

"And this," the Confession says, "is the loftiest worship according to the word of God." Consequently, the invocation of the saints infringes on the divine attributes, is subversive of the supreme authority of God, and undermines the necessity of spiritual worship. In the formulation of systems of worship, all orthodox churches agree that adoration belongs to God alone. "But as the Catholic and Greek churches in all formal elements of their doctrinal system have ranged the human side by side, yea exalted it above the divine in revelation, so in this special part of their cultus, they substantially present a human element for worship in the religious veneration they accord to the Virgin Mary, saints, images and relics."‡ The deliverances of the church on this subject virtually concede that it is not necessary to worship God alone. The Council of Trent impliedly pronounces refusal to invoke the saints a heresy, and the Protestant precept that God alone must be worshipped, a sin. But Justin Martyr|| asks Trypho: "Do you think that any other one is said to be worthy of worship and called Lord and God in the Scriptures except the Maker of all, and Christ who by so many scriptures was proved to you to have become man?" And Theodoret tells us that "To him alone who is God we must bring our worship." How these early Fathers bind all their thoughts to the revealed thought of God! But no wonder, for Christ condemned Samaritanism solely on the ground of trying to be independent of revelation. The advocacy of saint worship rests on the same independence of divine teaching. We know what we worship; they think they know.

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\* The Confessions of Christendom, 68.

† Dr. Hodge discusses these fully in "Systematic Theology," Vol. III., p. 283.

‡ Guericke, 230.

|| Ante-Nicene Fathers, I., 232.

*This is nothing less than an invasion of the unity and supremacy of God* and an infringement on his attributes. That it was so understood by the Confessors is seen in their opinion that invocation of the saints was antagonistic to the first Article of the Confession. How could that Article stand, they ask, if a multitude of beings ranged themselves between the believer and God? Of course, these Confessors were only fallible men, the adversaries charge, who constructed this doctrinal standpoint upon their own perverted theology. Let it be admitted that in according to the *Augustana* its rightful place, we need not sanction everything its indiscreet admirers and indiscriminating laudators have written. If it is *not* a pyramid—its foundation article the Trinity, and its capstone true worship—it is, nevertheless, a living organism, a colossal, pyramidal oak; its main stem, the one grand thought, God in Christ working by his Spirit, and all the other articles naturally and rationally growing out of that, branch-like—and all these the essential, evolutionary outflow from the *Truth*, eternal, self-existent, absolute, as the tree itself grows from the ground in all its beauty and majestic stateliness. When it speaks here it only reiterates the declarations of God's word, which tolerates no divided worship. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."\* "The Lord thy God shalt thou fear, and him alone shalt thou serve."† Here is no room either for image-worship or hagiodulia. Chemnitz‡ concedes to this argument the very first importance. "All the heathen methods are false and vain; they are so because it is impossible without the word of God and by the light of natural reason alone to understand true worship. Hence it is a most extraordinary and indescribable blessing of God that he has revealed in his word how he wishes to be invoked, and what kind of invocation is acceptable to him." What then is worship? What is Christian worship? Schleiermacher defines it thus: "The sum total of all actions whereby we present ourselves as organs of God by means of the Holy Spirit; it embraces all the virtues so far as manifested in the dominion of the spirit over the flesh."§ Wuttke: "As believing is taking up into our moral consciousness the ever-present divine, so worshiping is elevating our moral consciousness to God."|| To which Köllner

\* Exodus xx. 5.

† Deut. vi. 13.

‡ Examen Con. Tri., Pt. 3, Sec. 3.

§ Wuttke: Ethics, I., 369.

|| Ibid., II., 215.

adds: "Unconditional confidence in God and thankful recognition and acceptance of his mercies."\* This definition precludes the very thought of intrusion from any outside claimant; it implies omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, infinitude in all things, as belonging to the object of worship. And as the Roman Catholic includes in his cultus the Trinity with all the saints, he means to render the elements of worship to all alike, no matter how rigorously he pleads for a distinction between superior and inferior reverence. Herbert, in his beautiful poem, "To all the Saints and Angels," after acknowledging the tempting fascination of adoring them and paying loftiest tribute to the blessed Maid, breaks forth:

"But now (alas), I dare not ; for our King  
Whom we do all joyntly adore and praise  
Bids no such thing :  
And where his pleasure no injunction layes,  
( 'Tis your own case) ye never move a wing.  
All worship is prerogative, and a flower  
Of his rich crown, from whom lyes no appeal  
At the last houre.  
Therefore we dare not from his garland steal  
To make a posie for inferiour power." †

In this brief poetic offering there is concentrated the substance of divine teaching. Moses‡ cries out: "Thou, O Lord, art my refuge," to which St. Ambrose§ answers: "Thou alone, O Lord, art to be invoked." David|| rejoices to sing "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him," and St. Basil¶ replies: "Prayer is directed not to man, but to God only." Asaph\*\* hears God say: "I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me." St. Ephraim†† rejoins: "To thee and none besides thee do I make my petition." To Isaiah‡‡ God says: "I am the Lord; that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." "And this knowledge," maintains Origen,§§ in his argument against Celsus, "will not permit us to pray with confidence to any other than the supreme God, who is sufficient for all things, through our Saviour

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\* *Symbolik der Luth. Kirche.*

† Prose and Verse, 75.

‡ Ps. xci. 9.

§ Jenkins, 195.

|| Ps. cxlv. 18.

¶ In libello Maron.

\*\* Ps. l. 15.

†† Homilies.

‡‡ Is. xlii. 8.

§§ Ante-Nicene Fathers, IV., 544.

the Son of God." "We dare not worship those who are themselves worshipers."

But to this representation of our relation to the one supreme and all-merciful Being, the advocate of invocation of the saints rejoins: "Just as in approaching a monarch we need the good will of his courtiers and intimate associates for permission to enter his presence, so we need the heavenly beings around the King of Glory to carry our petitions into the sacred presence." "Whence have we," asks Spiel, "the great confidence in the intercession of the saints, but in the untold assurances that our prayers have been heard?" So then our heavenly Father would not have heard them if it had not been for these intermediate influences by which they came to the ear of the Almighty!\* It will be remembered that heathen philosophy urged the same reason for the invocation of the Olympian gods†—that they should be Jupiter's courtiers and introduce his votaries. St. Ambrose in his exposition of the first chapter of Romans, and St. Augustine in the eighth chapter of the City of God, antagonize this heathenism of saint-worship.‡ Besides, here is brought to light the weakness of this entire system of creature-worship, which represents God as an unapproachable potentate whose clemency can be secured only through the recommendation of some favorite, and not of himself immediately. Have we not access to God through his Son Jesus Christ, and is not this the distinctive privilege of all Christians? The restoration of this gospel was the first work of the Lutheran theologians. How then will application to the saints appear to the saints themselves, but an unpardonable derogation from the glory of Christ? And what will God himself think of such court trickery as that? Even an earthly monarch, who had appointed his own son as the sole means of access to himself and as the direct dispenser of his pardons and graces, would feel that recourse to the servants of his household, or to any indirect method of approaching him, would be a very grave affront.§ Can we think less highly of God and his Son as our only revealed intercessor in whose name we are to bring our supplications and thanksgivings to the throne of grace? "This is the Christian religion, that no one should be worshiped save the one

\* And yet Bellarmine shows that God makes known our wants to the saints, so they may pray for us.—*De Sanc. Beat.*, Cap. XX., 735.

† Hase: Polemik, 310.

‡ Chemnitz: Ex. Conc. Trid. Pt. 3, Sec. 4.

§ Jenkins: Romanism of Pius VI., 193.

God, because no one makes the soul blessed save the one God.”—*Augustine*.\*

But furthermore, rendering worship to beings inferior to the triune God opens the way for a *Christianized Polytheism*, the utter extinction of which God was seeking in all ages of the world. In a professedly monotheistic religion it supplies the polytheistic wants of the soul. Before people know the true God they long after gods; their souls reach out for a substantial answer to the consciousness of indestructibility. There is a twilight of immortality in every rational being. But what shall bring the perfect light of day? Before the sun of righteousness arises, the dimly glimmering stars of great heroes must answer. Something must fill up the vast distance between humanity and divinity. There is, therefore, a tendency in the human heart to create arbitrary objects of worship, according to the lust or the fancy of the worshiper. The purest element of heathen theology is the deification of intellectual and moral attributes—manliness, purity, devotion, unstained truthfulness, courage, bravery, fortitude. Then it is easy enough to transfer these abstractions to concrete realities, and personify one or the other in some separate human being. Hence the multiplication of the *Divi* among heathen peoples. In the paganizing period of Christianity it was but natural to imitate the heathen custom. Melancthon explains that from heathen examples the multiplication of saints arose. Some building in Rome which had at first been erected by Agrippa to the avenging Jupiter and his satellites was afterwards rededicated by the Roman bishop to Mary and all the martyrs; the ancient Roman Pantheon became the modern Christian Pantheon: the saints were considered Christianized heroes and semi-deified human beings in precisely the old heathen style. In the *Libri Carolini* beatification is made indetical with deification—canonizing “the faithful” the same thing as elevating the emperors to the position of *Theoi*.† Canonization is only another name for apotheosis, with only this difference: In the latter case it was the exaltation of the emperor to the gods, in the former the elevation included the humblest and poorest who had been washed in the blood of the Lamb and whose lives had been adored by Christian virtues.‡

Mantuanus observes that just as the Latins invoked Mars to aid in military enterprises, Castor and Pollux to take knight errantry

\* *Vera Religione*, cap. 55.

† Neander.

‡ Hase; *Polemik*, 310.



under their patronage, and Juno to be the protectress from fevers, so Saint Anna is a refuge in storms, Sebastian from pestilence, Florian from fire; Saints George and Martin are the tutelaries of the Germans; Saints Paul and Peter of the Romans. As the custom of calling upon the patron saint grows in practice, the worship of Jesus falls into the back-ground if not entire neglect. And that this assertion is not a perversion of the facts is plain enough from the numerous instances of which the following are examples. A Tyrolese mountaineer placed this inscription over the door of his house; "Holy Florian, defend this house from fire." And a citizen of Vienna painted on the gable of his dwelling: "This house stood formerly in the hand of God; he allowed it to burn away; now it is committed to St. Florian's care." If these examples seem somewhat ordinary and ludicrous, as Hase facetiously intimates, then the fact that Francis of Assisi praised the legend: "My saint hears whom *God does not*," borders on the sacrilegious. Yet this is the inevitable consequence of placing a creature before the Creator. Pure monotheism cuts the roots of all polytheizing tendencies. Is there any unfairness in thus stating the case? Suppose that on some morning when all the worshipers had left the cathedral a monotheist from some other sphere should quietly enter it, pick up the prayer book, and see the *ora pro nobis* to scores of beings with human names, should see in the pictures which adorn the walls the figure of a crowned woman with a child in her arms and prostrate penitents about her, should examine the marble statutes on all sides with evidences of superhuman reverence being paid them, what would be his reflections? The pagans and Manicheans reproached the saint-worshipers centuries ago for deifying human beings. Until the 9th century the churches had only one altar. But the learned papal bishop Nicolas of Cusa accused the Italians of substituting saints for the old Latin gods.

Possibly the Arian controversy is indirectly responsible, in part at least, for this polytheizing tendency in worship. The divine of the Saviour's personality was exalted at the expense of the human. The idea of the *God-man* was too much lost sight of in the attempted identification of his nature with the unseen and incomprehensible Deity. Hence Christ became the object of a remoter, a more awful adoration. Says Milman:\* "The mind began to seek out, or

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\* History of Christianity: Book IV., 425.

eagerly to seize some other more material beings in closer alliance with human sympathies. The constant propensity of man to humanize his deity, readily clung with its devotion to humbler objects. The weak wing of the common mind could not soar to the unapproachable light in which Christ dwelt with the Father: it dropped to the earth and bowed itself down before some less mysterious and less infinite object of veneration." What then? Is the weakness of faith in the only true God and the slovenliness of materializing propensities an excuse for turning away from the Supreme Ruler and fixing the heart's devotions upon the works of his hands? They who would remain faithful to the ancient creed of the Christian Church in every age dare not divide their worship between the Creator and the creature. Says Dante:\* "Invoking the saints is false worship. In Christ alone is our salvation." "And when thou prayest thou shalt say: Our Father who art in heaven." "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him."†

3. *If they divide their worship they become guilty of idolatry.* To this conclusion we are reluctantly but inevitably driven by a scriptural, rational and practical study of this subject. It is noteworthy to remark that the Confessors in the true spirit of conciliation at first hesitated to press the charge of idolatry against Rome, but in the later symbols, the growing superstition is severely handled. The Apology in discussing the belief in special saints as the patrons of certain civil employments and avocations, calls it a "shameful heathen lie"‡ and in the Smalcald Articles the entire practice of invoking the saints is declared to be "idolatry."§ Much stronger language is used at other places, but nothing in the Lutheran symbols can compare with the expressions employed in the Helvetic and Gallic Confessions. Indeed, Calvinism allows hagiolatry no ground of justification whatever, and calls it a deception of the devil.|| Neander states that here is to be found one of the causes of the rise of Mohammedanism—the original adherents considering Mariolatry equivalent to idolatry.

In view of such facts and others, numerous attempts have been made by Rome to modify and explain the nature of this fundamental element of its system. The explicit statements of God's word, for-

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\* Neander. † Ps. cxlv. 18. ‡ Mueller, Sym. Bücher, 229. § Ibid, 305.

|| Gall. Conf., Art. 24. See also Zöckler, 172; Hase, 307, and Guericke, 239.

bidding even the faintest and apparently innocent manifestations of a depreciated worship of God; the positive denunciations by the apostolic and early church fathers against polytheistic tendencies in prayer; the rigorous opposition on the part of pious and influential Catholics against the introduction of intermediate objects of veneration and the disastrous practical consequences, all have had more or less influence with Rome in vindicating the "invocation of the saints." Indeed it has become necessary for the clergy to apologize for it and extenuate its results, rather than set up a practical defense. This is especially true in regard to the charge of idolatry.

Conscious of the justice and seriousness of this imputation, the Roman Curia has given the name of *relative* or *indirect* worship to this cultus, a worship which will begin with inferior, but ultimately terminate in God as the final object of adoration. It draws the subtle distinction between the worship of God and that of the saints by pointing out the infinite interval between the saints and the King of the saints. Bellarmine\* receives the credit of amplifying and officially formulating the differences which Augustine is believed to have originated in his rules on "reverencing the martyrs." Three degrees of worship are specified: first, *doulia*, that which is an inferior kind of worship and due to the saints and angels; it is more than human and less than divine; secondly, *hyperdoulia*—a word of comparative recent coinage to describe the nature of the veneration to be shown to the Virgin Mary, a form of worship loftier than the *doulia*; and thirdly, *latria*, which signifies supreme worship and is applicable to God alone. Augustine calls the first of these forms *civil worship*—*cultum civilem sue cultum charitatis ac societatis*, and the latter he calls *religious worship*, *cultum religionis*, and maintains that all forms are *per maiorem gloriam Dei*.†

But there is not sufficient clearness and force in these theoretical distinctions—the ordinary mind will not grasp them. Besides, the Scriptures defend only one kind of worship; the words adoration and invocation are used interchangeably in reference to the same object; invoking and adoring are applicable in a like sense; there is nowhere any divine authority to teach adoration of God and

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\* Guericke: *Christliche Symbolik*, 243.

† For the most lucid elaboration of this matter to be found anywhere, see Carpzov: *Isagoge in libros symbolicos*, 539.

invocation of saints as an evidence that the higher reverence is accorded to the former. Says Hopkins in his exposition of the first commandment: "Withhold the worship from the saints, and all other honors rendered them will speedily fall away." This succinct, but axiomatic truth settles the whole question of graduated steps in devotion between the creature and the Creator. But the design of keeping up these distinctions is to show that in worshipping the saints God is worshiped supremely and the saints inferiorly. This removes the objection of idolatry, it is thought. But the same process of reasoning would prove that the heathen who adored Jupiter as the one supreme—the father of all—yet invoked "lords many and gods many" of minor and inferior greatness, were not idolaters. Yet the Bible expressly condemns as idolatrous all the ancient polytheisms which acknowledged a subordination in the sphere of deity, and yet placed over all the minor and secondary divinities, one supreme God—the creator of all things.\* It broadly and practically argues that such divinities are gods, and to worship them was to render divine homage. Dr. Hodge† argues very conclusively that any homage, internal or external, which involves the ascription of divine attributes to its object, if that object be a creature, is idolatrous. And thus the homage paid by Catholics to the Virgin and the saintly host is a question of fact and not of theory. Pusey‡ relates that a friend of his was asked to offer a prayer to the Virgin Mary in exactly the same language which we address to the Holy Trinity. The reader of Roman Catholic literature will be astonished to find so many illustrations confirmatory of this. Yet Cardinal Newman§ insists that idolatry is: "regarding and worshipping a being as one and the supreme God, which *is* not; but any other worship is not idolatry, even though we regard a saint as a secondary divinity 'all but' the one and supreme God." We can only ask the devout and learned defender of "Mary and all the saints," what then shall we make of the fact that there has been in all ages an idolatry which has not answered his definition, though Scripture, history, reason and common sense have all so designated it from the creation of the world? It is much easier to construct

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\* See this idea admirably discussed by Mozley; *Theory of Development*, 67.

† *Systematic Theology*, III., 281.

‡ *Eirenicon*, 106.

§ *Development of Doctrine*.

theories *from* the teachings of history, than to fit the teachings of history *into* theories evolved from one's own consciousness.

And here the burden of the argument may rest. Let it be admitted that theoretical distinctions can be preserved in the canons of œcumenical councils and papal decrees: are they practical? Even if we were compelled to admit the reasons Romanists urge as sufficient to establish distinctions of worship, history shows that practically the passing from invocation to adoration is speedy and easy and hagiolatry soon becomes idolatry;\* and the proof is abundant that countless Catholics in all circumstances of life apply much quicker to the Virgin and the saints than to the Father and the Son. And why not? It is so attractive to human nature. Besides, what worshiper can keep in mind the varieties of prayer demanded by the three-fold form of devotion? As soon as he approaches the object of his devotions, intellectual distinctions must absolutely vanish. You may convey to the ear the separate idea of *latria*, *doulia* and *hyperdoulia*, but you can not convey it to the heart of the worshiper. What answer would the devout Romanist of Italy, or Spain, or even France, give to your question as to how he distributed his worship this morning between his patron saint, the Virgin Mary, and the Deity? His very ignorance and simplicity would be the strongest argument against the hair-splitting discriminations in worship. At least the common people are unable to reconcile the *de fide* teachings of the church and the pious opinions obtained from popular instruction.†

Yet the saint worshiper strenuously contends that the homage he pays to angels and the spirits of the departed is an indirect exaltation of God and promotion of the glory of Christ; these created beings are the reflection of divine majesty, the halo around the brow of Divinity, and when he beholds them by faith he stands in awe before the Deity himself, in adoring the heavenly host he accords the ultimate thoughts of his devotion to Him alone. We may answer him after the sublime manner of Arnobius,‡ in his masterly defence of Christianity against the heathenism of the third and fourth centuries: "If you cannot prove irrefutably that these saints (gods) are what you represent them to be, why do you ask us to worship them? We want to know whom we worship. If they are

\* Zöckler, 170.

† Pusey: Eirenicon, 12.

‡ Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. VI., 464.



what you tell us of them, why do you not prove it to us from the eternal principles of reason and common sense? And if that is true which you affirm of them, namely, that they have sprung from the Supreme Being and are a part of him, why do you ask of us the idle task of approaching one or each of them personally, since it is His good pleasure that we should take hold of the divine himself?

The supreme Deity suffices us—the Creator and Lord of the universe, who orders and rules all things; in whom we serve all that requires our service; in him we worship all that should be adored, and venerate all that demands the homage of our reverence.” Even long before (A. D. 110), Tatian\* had said: “Man is to be honored as a fellow-man; but God alone is to be revered.” Here are the seeds of Athanasius’ adamant argument, which assails the idea of inferior worship in the Church of Rome with as crushing a force as it did the Arians when he convicted them of idolatry in the worship of Christ as a creature: “Ye have two gods—the uncreated and a created—one begotten and the other unbegotten.”

Finally, saint-worship is *dangerous* because it is destructive of *sound morality*. The logical sequence of the argumentation of our Confession points out this practical result. Not to say, that the practice it condemns endangers our salvation—that is a foregone conclusion—but that it undermines and eventually destroys the principles called for by a pure code of morals. This is not a question of speculative theology or metaphysics, but of history, which must decide in how far the morality of a people suffers from the intermingling of the names of the departed in their devotions. Dr. Newman, by *a priori* reasoning, seeks to prove that the carnal mind will not be led to the worship of God if the worship of saints is forbidden. But St. Paul† is against him. Admit co-ordinate divinities, and the same consequences will follow in professedly Christian devotion which followed the forsaking of the Supreme Being in Gentile worship. Only the in-dwelling of God in the soul can arrest the downward tendency induced by original sin. The object of faith and veneration must be both almighty and immaculate. This is the dictum of universal experience, and not the dictum of a system. And probably the least objectionable feature is that the invocation of the saints inspires and encourages the tendency toward a mere

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\* Ibid, II., 66, *Contra Arian*.

† Rom. i. 23, 24.

*sensuous worship*, which, if it does not belittle the faculties of the soul, does not quicken and ennoble them.

Gibbons\* admits that a heart tenderly attached to the saints will give vent to its feelings in the language of hyperbole, just as an enthusiastic lover will call his future bride his adorable queen, without any intention of worshiping her as a goddess. But can such a sentimentalism be acceptable to Christ? It borders on the offensive, and the learned Cardinal knows full well that even the worship of Mary has often nothing exalting in it. Some of the invocations addressed to her are shocking in their suggestiveness.† It seems almost irreverent to detract in any way from the honor of the mother of our Lord, but if she be conscious of some of the silly contemplations which have been written about her in the name of religion, the spotless purity of her noble womanhood must revolt with indignation.

Saints usurp the place of Christ in the soul; they are so much easier of access, so much easier to conciliate, so much more tolerant of human weakness, so much more ready to make allowance for broken law. Thus not only are the elements of divine worship obliterated, but the personal efforts at holiness neglected by those who expect their patron saints to accomplish for them the needed restoration. As in the days of Deborah,‡ “the highways are unoccupied, and the travelers walk through the by-ways.” It is the demand of true Christianity to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, but there are not a few people of doubtful morality, who, rather than do this *one* duty, will undertake to do more than their duty. True, the devout Romanist will ask whether saint-worshippers are not better church-goers than their opponents; whether art has not received the impetus of its wonderful development from the opportunities offered to sculpture and painting by the cultus he defends; whether the rich variety in the history of the saints, as, for instance, the innocent sweetness of St. Agnes, the captivating beauty of a Magdalene, the holy earnestness of the dying Jerome, have not had a most potent influence upon the mind and heart of human society; whether the countless instances of ecclesiastical monuments, erected in memory of a mother, a child, a brother, a friend, have not dotted many lands with the grandest churches, chapels and monasteries? Would the worship of the saints, then, weaken devotion to the Saviour? Would

\* Faith of our Fathers, 182.

† Edgar's Variations of Popery, 547.

‡ Judges v. 6.

the honors paid to the mother of Christ detract from the reverence due her Son? Protestants will admit the premise, but the conclusion does not follow. Suppose saint-worship does contain much that is beautiful, and has given a powerful impulse to the plastic arts: the gods and goddesses of Greece were thought to be far more beautiful and found far more beautiful exemplification in art, nevertheless her religion was stamped from the beginning with the sure marks of mutability, corruption and decay.

Aside from the express teaching of God's word—by the admonition to worship God alone and by the prohibition not to divide allegiance—the question must be decided by the testimony of fact, not conjecture or presumption. We may assert in all charitableness to Catholic Christians that the ravages of unbelief and corrupt morality are greatest where adoration of the saints is made most prominent. One most notable phase was already remarkable in and prior to the days of the Reformers. It was a vast channel for the enrichment of the Church. The popes turned the sale of the works of the saints, their bones and other relics, into a most lucrative trade. Wickcliffe had said: "Avarice lies at the root of the practice," and Luther, with his idiomatic vigor, replied: "The pope\* has reaped an immense revenue from the traffic; when once no more aid can be gained from them, they will soon be allowed to rest." It is notorious to-day that Rome makes as good a merchandise out of the relics of Christian martyrs as do the Egyptians out of the mummies of heathen Pharaohs and Potiphars.† "If thou wilt help me to the realization of my ambition, I will canonize thee," said Pope Benedict XIV. to an object of his veneration.‡

This is not an accidental or necessary outgrowth of the practice in a particular age or country. History, past and present, marshals its evidence. In the Abyssinian or Ethiopian Church, where the worship of the saints was the most conspicuous element of Christianity, the immorality was notorious and shocking in the extreme.§ Claus Harms|| in replying to the question whether the final abolition of this practice from the German churches had enhanced the moral status of the people, unhesitatingly asserts that especially two virtues of the Christian faith, industry and chastity, had largely increased.

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\* De Missa : Mueller, 305.

† Miracles and Saints, 93.

‡ Hase: Polemik, 301.

§ Herzog: I., 48.

|| Augs. Conf., 218.

Dr. Greenwald\* gives an alarming picture of the country where this fundamental element of Roman Catholicism has untrammelled sway. Dr. Pusey† says, "It is notorious that this system is the great barrier to Christian union, and the ground of alienation of pious minds in England." The piety of the Church of England cannot affiliate with the state of morality in English Romanism! What a commentary on the lugubrious lamentations of Faber: "*Here in England Mary is not half enough preached; hence it is that Jesus is not loved,‡ that heretics are not converted, that the Church is not exalted; that souls which might be saints, wither and dwindle. Thousands of souls perish because Mary is withheld from them.*"§ And all this because of the sensitiveness of the nation in regard to the honor and glory of JESUS. What is the significance of a comparison between South America, Mexico, or even Spain and Italy, where the worship of the saints has unhindered play, with England, and Germany, and the United States, where it is checked by what Faber calls "the sneers of heresy."

It has been intimated in high circles and on *ex cathedra* assurance that the definition of the *Cultus Sanctorum* was as necessary in the sixteenth century as was that of the *Homoousion* in the fourth; but this examination of Article XXI. of the Augsburg Confession shows that there is no similarity between a *truth* which had from the first been believed by all except acknowledged heretics, and a *practice* which was not observed by the successors of the apostles; had no definite and uniform advocacy among the Church Fathers; was always arraigned by some of the most spiritual men of the Church; had persistent opponents at the Council of Constance; was assailed in the ante-Tridentine theology, repudiated and condemned by many of the representative men of the Romish Communion; and, above all, is contrary to the word of God, derogatory to the glory of the Redeemer, repugnant to the spiritual worship of God, pervaded with the evils of polytheism and idolatry, and has no foundation in reason and morality.

Indeed, the cardinal doctrine so bravely defended by the Confessors finds a vivid illustration in a saying prevalent among the country people of Suabia, that immediately before death each Catholic must become Protestant—*Evangelische*; after extreme unction the priest

\* Luth. Ch. Rev., V., 11.

† The italics are Faber's.

‡ Eirenicon, 108.

§ Ibid, 115.

discloses to the dying the need of an implicit trust in Jesus, because all hope in the saints is a delusion. And this accords with the dying testimony of Augustine,\* who suddenly broke forth in his last moments, as if a revaluation had come to him from another world: "Now at last I have learned that the heavenly Father hears the prayers of his believing children." And that is the real "communion of saints," when all believers in the Triune God join with the angels and the saints in worshiping him in spirit and truth, who rules in heaven and on earth—our Creator, Preserver and Redeemer.

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\* *Apologia* : Mueller, 229.



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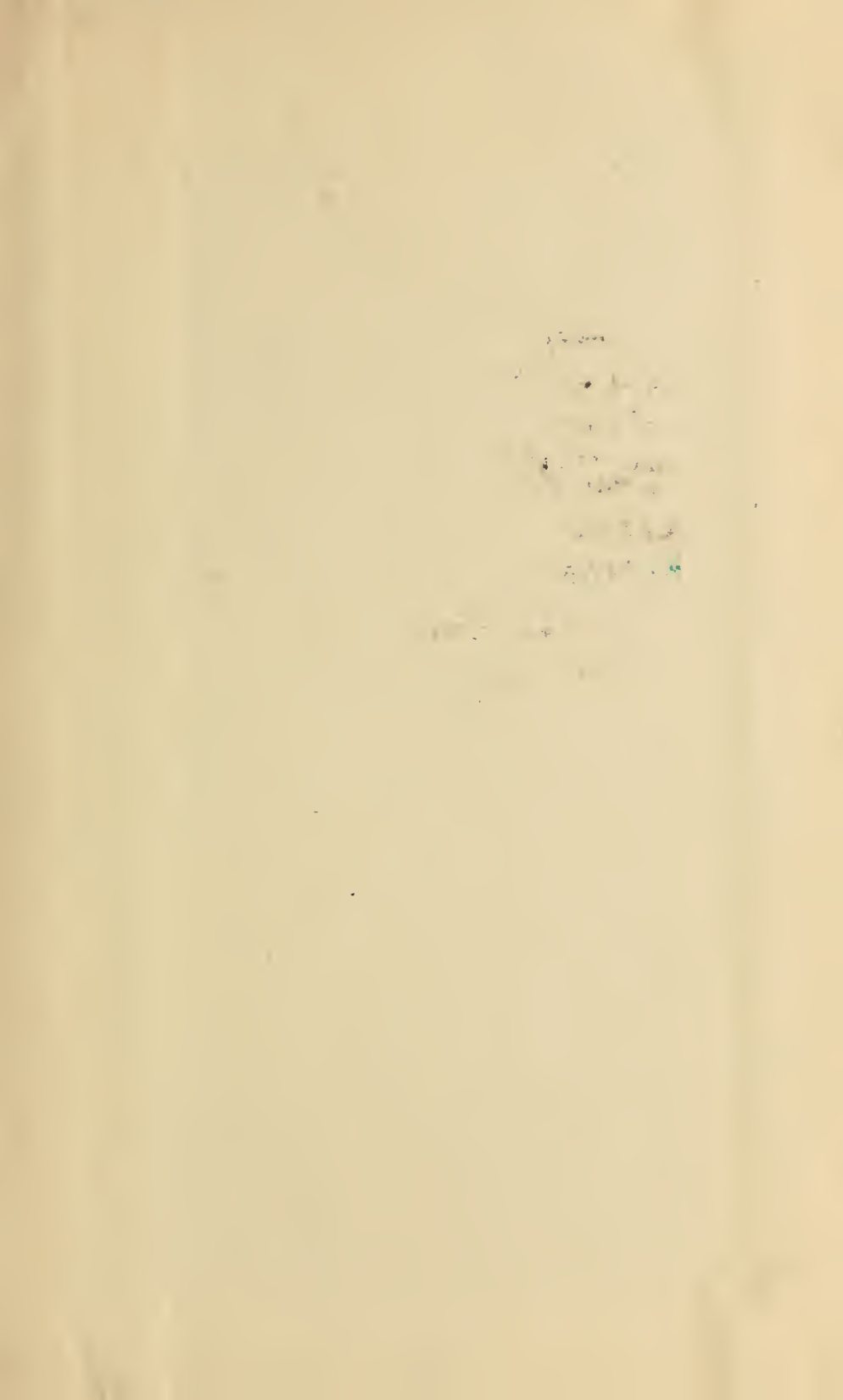




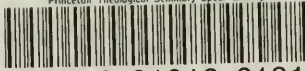
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